

THE
PLAYS AND POEMS

OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

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CONTAINING

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RISE AND
PROGRESS OF THE ENGLISH STAGE; OF THE
ŒCONOMY AND USAGES OF OUR ANCIENT THE-
ATRES; AND OF THE ORIGINAL ACTORS IN
SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS; ——— BY MALONE.

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SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

By JOHN ELSHAW, Esq. of Glastonbury.

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THE drama before the time of Shakspeare was so little cultivated, or so ill understood, that to many it may appear unnecessary to carry our theatrical researches higher than that period. Dryden has truly observed, that he "found not, but created first the stage;" of which no one can doubt, who considers, that of all the plays issued from the press antecedent to the year 1592, when there is reason to believe he commenced a dramattick writer, the titles are scarcely known, except to antiquaries; nor is there one of them that will bear a second perusal. Yet these, contemptible and few as they are, we may suppose to have been the most popular productions of the time, and the best that had been exhibited before the appearance of Shakspeare.

A minute investigation, therefore, of the origin and progress of the drama in England, will scarcely repay the labour of the inquiry. However, as the best introduction to an account of the internal economy and usages of the English
Vol. II. B theatres

¹ There are but thirty-eight plays, (exclusive of mysteries, moralities, interludes and translated pieces,) now extant, written antecedent to, or in, the year 1592. Their titles are as follows:

<i>Acolastus</i>	-	1540	<i>Appius and Virginia</i>	}	1575
<i>Ferrex and Porrex</i>	-	1561	<i>Gammer Gurton's Needle</i>	}	
<i>Damon and Pythias</i>	-	1562	<i>Promos and Cassandra</i>	-	1578
<i>Tancred and Gismund</i>	-	1568	<i>Arraignement of Paris</i>	}	
<i>Cambyfes</i> , no date, but probably written before	-	1570	<i>Sappho and Phao</i>	}	1584
			<i>Alexander and Campaspe</i>	}	
			<i>Misfortunes of Arthur</i>		1587

theatres in the time of Shakspeare, (the principal object of this dissertation,) I shall take a cursory view of our most ancient dramattick exhibitions, though I fear I can add but little to the researches which have already been made on that subject.

Mr. Warton in his elegant and ingenious History of English Poetry has given so accurate an account of our earliest dramattick performances, that I shall make no apology for extracting from various parts of his valuable work, such particulars as suit my present purpose.

The earliest dramattick entertainments exhibited in England, as well as every other part of Europe, were of a religious kind. So early as in the beginning of the twelfth century, it

<i>Hieronimo</i>			<i>Orlando Furioso</i>	
<i>Spanish Tragedy, or</i>	}	1588	<i>Alphonfus king of Arragon</i>	}
<i>Hieronimo is mad again</i>			<i>James IV. king of Scotland</i>	
<i>Tamburlaine</i>			<i>A Lookingglass for London and England</i>	}
<i>Titus Andronicus</i>		1589	<i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>	
<i>King Henry V. in or before</i>		1589	<i>Jew of Malta</i>	}
<i>Contention between the Houses of Yorke and Lancaster, in or before</i>		1590	<i>Dr. Faustus</i>	
<i>King John, in two parts</i>	}	1591	<i>Edward II.</i>	}
<i>Endymion</i>			<i>Lust's Dominion</i>	
<i>Soliman and Perseda</i>	}	in or before	<i>Massacre of Paris</i>	}
<i>Midas</i>			<i>Dido</i>	
<i>Galathea</i>		1592		
<i>Arden of Feversham</i>				

Between the years 1592 and 1600, the following plays were printed or exhibited; the greater part of which, probably, were written before our author commenced play-wright.

<i>Cleopatra</i>	}	1593	<i>Woman in the Moon</i>	1597
<i>Edward I.</i>			<i>Mucedorus</i>	
<i>Battle of Alcazar</i>	}		<i>The virtuous Octavia</i>	}
<i>Wounds of Civil War</i>			<i>Blind Beggar of Alexandria</i>	
<i>Selymus, Emperor of the Turks</i>			<i>Every Man in his Humour</i>	}
<i>Cornelia</i>			<i>Pinner of Wakefield</i>	
<i>Mother Bombe</i>	}	1594	<i>Warning for fair Women</i>	}
<i>The Cobler's Prophecy</i>			<i>David and Bethsabe</i>	
<i>The Wars of Cyrus</i>			<i>Two angry women of Abingdon</i>	}
<i>King Leir</i>			<i>The Case is altered</i>	
<i>Taming of a Shrew</i>	}		<i>Every Man out of his Humour</i>	}
<i>An old wives Tale</i>			<i>The Trial of Chevalry</i>	
<i>Maid's Metamorphoses</i>			<i>Humorous day's mirth</i>	}
<i>Love's Metamorphoses</i>			<i>Summer's last Will and Testament</i>	
<i>Pedler's Prophecy</i>	}	1595		
<i>Antoniws</i>				
<i>Edward III.</i>				
<i>Wily Beguiled</i>				

it was customary in England on holy festivals to represent, in or near the churches, either the lives and miracles of saints, or the most important stories of Scripture. From the subject of these spectacles, which, as has been observed, were either the miracles of saints, or the more mysterious parts of holy writ, such as the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, these scriptural plays were denominated *Miracles*, or *Mysteries*. At what period of time they were first exhibited in this country, I am unable to ascertain. Undoubtedly, however, they are of very great antiquity; and Riccoboni, who has contended that the Italian theatre is the most ancient in Europe, has claimed for his country an honour to which it is not entitled. The era of the earliest representation in Italy², founded on holy writ, he has placed in the year 1264, when the fraternity *del Gonfalone* was established; but we had similar exhibitions in England above 150 years before that time. In the year 1110, as Dr. Percy and Mr. Warton have observed, the Miracle-play of *Saint Catharine*, written by Geoffrey, a learned Norman, (afterwards Abbot of St. Alban's,) was acted, probably by his scholars, in the abbey of Dunstable; perhaps the first spectacle of this kind exhibited in England³. William Fitz-Stephen, a monk of Canterbury, who according to the best accounts composed his very curious work in 1174, about four years after the murder of his patron Archbishop Becket, and in the twenty-first year of the reign of King Henry the second, mentions, that "London, for its theatrical exhibitions, has religious plays, either the representations of miracles wrought by holy confessors, or the sufferings of martyrs⁴."

Mr. Warton has remarked, that "in the time of Chaucer Plays of Miracles appear to have been the common resort of idle gossips in Lent:"

"Therefore

² The French theatre cannot be traced higher than the year 1338, when the Mystery of the Passion was represented at St. Maur.

³ "Apud Dunstapliam—quendam ludum de sancta Katerina (quem MIRACULA vulgariter appellamus) fecit. Ad quæ decoranda, petiit a sacrista sancti Albani, ut sibi capæ chorales accommodarentur, et obtinuit." Vitæ Abbat. ad calc. Hist. Mat. Paris, folio, 1639, p. 56.

⁴ "Lundonia pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis lœnicis, ludos habet sanctiores, representationes miraculorum quæ sancti confessores operati sunt, seu representationes passionum, quibus claruit constantia martyrum." *Descriptio nobilissima civitatis Lundoniae*. Fitz-Stephen's very curious description of London is a portion of a larger work, entitled *Vita sancti Thome, Archiepiscopi et Martyris*, i. e. Thomas a Becket. It is ascertained to have been written after the murder of Becket in the year

“ Therefore made I my visitations
 “ To vigilies and to processions;
 “ To prechings eke, and to thise pilgrimages,
 “ To *playes of miracles*, and mariages^s, &c.”

“ And in Pierce Plowman’s Creed, a piece perhaps prior to Chaucer, a friar Minorite mentions these Miracles as not less frequented than market-towns and fairs:

“ We haunten no taverns, ne hobelen about,
 “ At markets and Miracles we meddle us never.”

The elegant writer, whose words I have just quoted, has given the following ingenious account of the origin of this rude species of dramatick entertainment:

“ About the eighth century trade was principally carried on by means of fairs, which lasted several days. Charlemagne established many great marts of this sort in France, as did William the Conqueror, and his Norman successors, in England. The merchants who frequented these fairs in numerous caravans or companies, employed every art to draw the people together. They were therefore accompanied by jugglers, minstrels, and buffoons; who were no less interested

year 1170, of which Fitz-Stephen was an ocular witness, and while King Henry II. was yet living. A modern writer with great probability supposes it to have been composed in 1174, the author in one passage mentioning that the church of Saint Paul’s was formerly metropolitical, and that it was thought it would become so again, “ should the citizens return into the island.” In 1174 King Henry II. and his sons had carried over with them a considerable number of citizens to France, and many English had in that year also gone to Ireland. See Dissertation prefixed to Fitz-Stephen’s *Description of London, newly translated*, &c. 4to. 1772, p. 16.—Near the end of his Description is a passage which ascertains it to have been written before the year 1182: “ *Lundonia et modernis temporibus reges illustres magnificosque peperit; imperatricem Matildam, Henricum regem tertium, et beatum Thomam*” [Thomas Becket]. Some have supposed that instead of *tertium* we ought to read *secundum*, but the text is undoubtedly right; and by *tertium*, Fitz-Stephen must have meant Henry, the second son of Henry the Second, who was born in London in 1156-7, and being heir apparent, after the death of his elder brother William, was crowned king of England in his father’s life-time, on the 15th of July, 1170. He was frequently styled *rex filius*, *rex juvenis*, and sometimes he and his father were denominated *Reges Anglie*. The young king, who occasionally exercised all the rights and prerogatives of royalty, died in 1182. Had he not been living when Fitz-Stephen wrote, he would probably have added *nuper defunctum*. Neither Henry II. nor Henry III. were born in London. See the Dissertation above-cited, p. 12.

^s The Wif of Bathes Prologue, v. 6137. Tyrwhitt’s edit.

interested in giving their attendance, and exerting all their skill on these occasions. As now but few large towns existed, no publick spectacles or popular amusements were established; and as the sedentary pleasures of domestick life and private society were yet unknown, the fair time was the season for diversion. In proportion as these shews were attended and encouraged, they began to be set off with new decorations and improvements: and the arts of buffoonery being rendered still more attractive, by extending their circle of exhibition, acquired an importance in the eyes of the people. By degrees the clergy, observing that the entertainments of dancing, musick and mimickry, exhibited at these protracted annual celebrities, made the people less religious, by promoting idleness and a love of festivity, proscribed these sports, and excommunicated the performers. But finding that no regard was paid to their censures, they changed their plan, and determined to take these recreations into their own hands. They turned actors; and instead of profane mummeries, presented stories taken from legends or the bible. This was the origin of sacred comedy. The death of St. Catharine, acted by the monks of saint Dennis, rivalled the popularity of the professed players. Musick was admitted into the churches, which served as theatres for the representation of holy farces. The festivals among the French, called *La fete de Fous, d'P' Ane, and des Innocens*, at length became greater favourites, as they certainly were more capricious and absurd, than the interludes of the buffoons at the fairs. These are the ideas of a judicious French writer now living, who has investigated the history of human manners with great comprehension and sagacity."

"Voltaire's theory on this subject is also very ingenious, and quite new. Religious plays, he supposes, came originally from Constantinople⁶; where the old Grecian stage continued to flourish in some degree, and the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides were represented, till the fourth century. About that period, Gregory Nazianzen, an archbishop, a poet, and one of the fathers of the church, banished pagan plays from
the

⁶ "At Constantinople" (as Mr. Warton has elsewhere observed,) "it seems that the stage flourished much, under Justinian and Theodora, about the year 540: for in the Basilical codes we have the oath of an actress, *ἐν ἀρχαῖς τῆς πόλεως*. Tom. vii. p. 682. edit. Fabrot. Græco-Lat. The ancient Greek fathers, particularly saint Chrysostom, are full of declamation against the drama; and complain, that the people heard a comedian with much more pleasure than a preacher of the gospel." Warton's *Hist. of E. P. I.* 244. n.

the stage at Constantinople, and introduced stories from the old and new Testament. As the ancient Greek tragedy was a religious spectacle, a transition was made on the same plan; and the chorusses were turned into Christian hymns. Gregory wrote many sacred dramas for this purpose, which have not survived those inimitable compositions over which they triumphed for a time: one, however, his tragedy called *Χριστός πασχών*, or *Christ's Passion*, is still extant. In the prologue it is said to be an imitation of Euripides, and that this is the first time the Virgin Mary had been introduced on the stage. The fashion of acting spiritual dramas, in which at first a due degree of method and decorum was preserved, was at length adopted from Constantinople by the Italians; who framed, in the depth of the dark ages, on this foundation, that barbarous species of theatrical representation called MYSTERIES, or sacred comedies, and which were soon after received in France. This opinion will acquire probability, if we consider the early commercial intercourse between Italy and Constantinople: and although the Italians, at the time when they may be supposed to have imported plays of this nature; did not understand the Greek language, yet they could understand, and consequently could imitate, what they saw."

"In defence of Voltaire's hypothesis, it may be further observed, that *The feast of fools* and of *the Ass*, with other religious farces of that sort, so common in Europe, originated at Constantinople. They were instituted, although perhaps under other names, in the Greek Church, about the year 990, by Theophylact, patriarch of Constantinople, probably with a better design than is imagined by the ecclesiastical annalists; that of weaning the minds of the people from the pagan ceremonies, by the substitution of christian spectacles partaking of the same spirit of licentiousness.—To those who are accustomed to contemplate the great picture of human follies which the unpolished ages of Europe hold up to our view, it will not appear surprizing, that the people who were forbidden to read the events of the sacred history in the bible, in which they were faithfully and beautifully related, should at the same time be permitted to see them represented on the stage, disgraced with the grossest improprieties, corrupted with inventions and additions of the most ridiculous kind, sullied with impurities, and expressed in the language of the lowest farce."

"On the whole, the *Mysteries* appear to have originated among the ecclesiasticks; and were most probably first acted with

with any degree of form by the monks. This was certainly the case in the English Monasteries⁷. I have already mentioned the play of Saint Catharine performed at Dunstable Abbey by the novices in the eleventh century, under the superintendence of Geoffrey a Parisian ecclesiastick: and the exhibition of the *Passion* by the mendicant friars of Coventry and other places. Instances have been given of the like practice among the French. The only persons who could now read, were in the religious societies; and various circumstances, peculiarly arising from their situation, profession, and institution, enabled the Monks to be the sole performers of these representations."

"As learning increased, and was more widely disseminated, from the monasteries, by a natural and easy transition, the practice migrated to schools and universities, which were formed on the monastick plan, and in many respects resembled the ecclesiastical bodies⁸."

Candlemas Day, or *The Slaughter of the Innocents*, written by Ihan Parfre in 1512, *Mary Magdalene*, produced in the same year⁹, and *The Promises of God*, written by John Bale, and printed in 1538, are curious specimens of this early species of drama. But the most ancient as well as most complete collection of this kind is, *The Chester Mysteries*, which were written by Ralph Higden, a Monk of the Abbey of Chester, about the year 1328¹⁰, of which a particular account will be found

⁷ "In some regulations given by Cardinal Wolsey to the monasteries of the Canons regular of Saint Austin, in the year 1519, the brothers are forbidden to be *lufores* aut *mimici*, players or mimicks. But the prohibition means that the monks should not go abroad to exercise these arts in a secular and mercenary capacity. See *Annal. Burtonenses*, p. 437."

In 1589, however, an injunction made in the MEXICAN COUNCIL was ratified at Rome, to prohibit all clerks from playing in the Mysteries even on Corpus Christi day. See *HIST. OF E. P.* II. 201.

⁸ Warton's *HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY*, II. pp. 366et seq.

⁹ Mss. Digby, 133. Bbl. Bodl.

¹⁰ Mss. Harl. 2013, &c. "Exhibited at Chester in the year 1327, at the expence of the different trading companies of that city. *The Fall of Lucifer*, by the Tanners. *The Creation*, by the Drapers. *The Deluge*, by the Dyers. *Abraham*, *Melchisedech*, and *Lot*, by the Barbers. *Moses*, *Balak*, and *Balaam*, by the Cappers. *The Salvation* and *Nativity*, by the Wrightes. *The Shepherds feeding their flocks by night*, by the Painters and Glaziers. *The three Kings*, by the Vinters. *The Oblation of the three Kings*, by the Mercers. *The killing of the Innocents*, by the Goldsmiths. *The Purification*, by the Blacksmiths. *The Temptation*, by the Butchers. *The last Supper*, by the Bakers. *The blind Men and Lazarus*, by the Glovers. *Jesus and the Lepers*, by the Corvesarys. *Christs Passion*, by the Bowyers, Fletchers, and Ironmongers

found below. I am tempted to transcribe a few lines from the third of these pageants, *The Deluge*, as a specimen of the ancient Mysteries.

The first scenical direction is.—“*Et primo in aliquo supremo loco, sive in nubibus, si fieri poterat, loquatur DEUS ad Noe, extra archam existente cum tota familia sua.*” Then the ALMIGHTY, after expatiating on the sins of mankind, is made to say :

Man that I made I will destroye,
Beast, worme, and fowle to sleie,
For one earth that doe me nye,
The folke that are herone.
It harmes me fore hartefully
The malice that doth nowe multiplie,
That fore it greeves me inwardlie,
That ever I made man.
Therefore, Noe, my servant free,
That righteous man arte, as I see,
A shipp soone thou shalt make thee
Of trees drye and lighte.

Litill

mongers. *Descent into Hell*, by the Cooks and Innkeepers. *The Resurrection*, by the Skinners. *The Ascension*, by the Taylors. *The Election of S. Matthias, sending of the Holy Ghost*, &c. by the Fishmongers. *Antichrist*, by the Clothiers. *Day of Judgement*, by the Websters. The reader will perhaps smile at some of these combinations. This is the substance and order of the former part of the play. God enters creating the world; he breathes life into Adam, leads him into Paradise, and opens his side while sleeping. Adam and Eve appear naked, and *not ashamed*, and the old serpent enters lamenting his fall. He converses with Eve. She eats of the forbidden fruit, and gives part to Adam. They propose, according to the stage-direction, to make themselves *subligacula a felis quibus tegamus pudenda*. Cover their nakedness with leaves, and converse with God. God's curse. The serpent *exit* hissing. They are driven from Paradise by four angels and the cherubim with a flaming sword. Adam appears digging the ground, and Eve spinning. Their children Cain and Abel enter: the former kills his brother. Adam's lamentation. Cain is banished," &c. Warton's *HIST. OF E. P.* I. 243.

Mr. Warton observes in a note in his second volume, p. 180, that "if it be true that these *Mysteries* were composed in the year 1328, and there was so much difficulty in obtaining the Pope's permission that they might be presented in English, a presumptive proof arises, that all our *Mysteries* before that period were in Latin. These plays will therefore have the merit of being the first English interludes."

Polydore Virgil mentions in his book *de Rerum Inventoribus*, Lib. v. c. 2, that the *Mysteries* were in his time in English. "Solemus vel more prisorum spectacula edere populo, ut ludos, venationes,—recitare comœdias, item in templis vitas divorum ac martyria repræsentare, in quibus, ut cunctis par sit voluptas, qui recitant, vernaculam linguam tantum usurpant." The first three books of Polydore's work were published in 1499; in 1517, at which time he was in England, he added five more.

OF THE ENGLISH STAGE. 9

Litill chambers therein thou make,
And byndinge slytche also thou take,
Within and without ney thou flake

To anynte yt through all thy mighte, &c.

After some dialogue between Noah, Sem, Ham, Japhet, and their wives, we find the following stage-direction: "Then Noe with all his family shall make a signe as though they wrought uppon the shippe with divers instruments, and after that God shall speake to Noe:

Noe, take thou thy meanye,
And in the shipp hie that ye be,
For non so righteous man to me

Is nowe on earth livinge.

Of clean beastes with the thou take
Seven and seven, or thou flake,
He and she, make to make,

By live in that thou bring, &c.

"Then Noe shall goe into the arke with all his familye, his wife excepte. The arke must be boarded round aboute, and uppon the bordes all the beastes and fowles hereafter rehearsed must be painted, that there wordes maye agree with the pictures."

SEM. Sier, here are lions, libardes, in,
Horfes, mares, oxen and swyne,
Neates, calves, sheepe and kyne,
Here sitten thou maye see, &c.

After all the beasts and fowls have been described, Noah thus addresse his wife:

NOE. Wife, come in, why standes thou there?
Thou art ever froward, that dare I swere,
Come in on Godes halfe; tyme it were,
For fear lest that wee drowne.

WIFE. Yea, sir, set up your faile,
And rowe forth with evil haile,
For withouten anie faile,
I wil not oute of this toun; ;
But I have my gossipes everich one,
One foote further I will not gone:
They shal not drown by St. John,
And I may save ther life.
They loved me full well by Christ:
But thou wilt let them in thie chift,
Ellis rowe forth, Noe, when thou lise,
And get thee a newe wife.

At length Sem and his brethren put her on board by force, and on Noah's welcoming her, "Welcome, wife, into this boate," she gives him a box on the ear: adding, "Take thou that for thy note."

Many licentious pleasantries, as Mr. Warton has observed, were sometimes introduced in these religious representations. "This might imperceptibly lead the way to subjects entirely profane, and to comedy: and perhaps earlier than is imagined. In a Mystery of *The Massacre of the Holy Innocents*,² part of the subject of a sacred drama given by the English fathers at the famous Council of Constance, in the year 1417, a low buffoon of Herod's court is introduced, desiring of his lord to be dubbed a knight, that he might be properly qualified to go on the adventure of killing the mothers of the children of Bethlehem. This tragical business is treated with the most ridiculous levity. The good women of Bethlehem attack our knight-errant with their spinning-wheels, break his head with their distaffs, abuse him as a coward and a disgrace to chivalry, and send him to Herod as a recreant champion with much ignominy.—It is certain that our ancestors intended no sort of impiety by these monstrous and unnatural mixtures. Neither the writers nor the spectators saw the impropriety, nor paid a separate attention to the comick and the serious part of these motley scenes; at least they were persuaded that the solemnity of the subject covered or excused all incongruities. They had no just idea of decorum, consequently but little sense of the ridiculous: what appears to us to be the highest burlesque, on them would have made no sort of impression. We must not wonder at this, in an age when courage, devotion, and ignorance, composed the character of European manners; when the knight going to a tournament, first invoked his God, then his mistress, and afterwards proceeded with a safe conscience and great resolution to engage his antagonist. In these Mysteries I have sometimes seen gross and open obscenities. In a play of *The Old and New Testament* Adam and Eve are both exhibit-
ed

² It is obvious that the transcriber of these ancient Mysteries, which appear to have been written in 1328, represents them as they were exhibited at Chester in 1600, and that he has not adhered to the original orthography.

³ Mss. Digby, 134. Bibl. Bodl.

ed on the stage naked⁴, and conversing about their nakedness; this very pertinently introduces the next scene; in which they have coverings of fig-leaves. This extraordinary spectacle was beheld by a numerous assembly of both sexes with great composure: they had the authority of scripture for such a representation, and they gave matters just as they found them in the third chapter of Genesis. It would have been absolute heresy to have departed from the sacred text in personating the primitive appearance of our first parents, whom the spectators so nearly resembled in simplicity; and if this had not been the case the dramatists were ignorant what to reject and what to retain⁵."

"I must not omit," adds Mr. Warton⁶, "an anecdote entirely new, with regard to the mode of playing the *Mysseries* at this period, [the latter part of the fifteenth century,] which yet is perhaps of much higher antiquity. In the year 1487, while Henry the seventh kept his residence at the castle of Winchester, on occasion of the birth of prince Arthur, on a Sunday, during the time of dinner, he was entertained with a religious drama called *Christi Descensus ad inferos*, or *Christ's descent into Hell*. It was represented by the *Pueri Eleemosynarii*, or choir-boys, of Hyde Abbey, and Saint Swithin's priory, two large monasteries at Winchester. This is the only proof I have ever seen of choir boys acting in the old *Mysseries*: nor do I recollect any other instance of a royal dinner, even on a festival, accompanied with this species of diversion⁷. The story of this interlude, in which the chief characters were Christ, Adam, Eve, Abraham, and John the Baptist, was not uncommon in the ancient religious drama, and I believe made a part of what is called the *LUDUS PASCHALIS*, or *Easter Play*. It occurs in the Coventry

⁴ This kind of primitive exhibition was revived in the time of King James the First, several persons appearing almost entirely naked in a Pastoral exhibited at Oxford before the king and queen, and the ladies who attended her. It is, if I recollect right, described by Winwood.

⁵ Warton's HIST. OF ENGLISH POETRY, I. pp. 242, *et seq.*

⁶ HIST. OF E. P. II. p. 206.

⁷ "Except, that on the first Sunday of the magnificent marriage of King James of Scotland with the princess Margaret of England, daughter of Henry the seventh, celebrated at Edinburgh with high splendour, "after dynnar a MORALITE was played by the said Master Inglyshe and hys companions in the presence of the kyng and qweene." On one of the preceding days, "after soupper the kyng and qweene beyng togader in hyr grett chamber, John Inglysh and hys companions *plaid*." This was in the year 1503. Apud Leland, coll. iii. p. 300. Append. edit. 1770."

Coventry Plays acted on Corpus Christi day^s, and in the Whitsun-plays at Chester, where it is called the HARROWING

OF

^s See an account of the Coventry Plays in Stevens's *Monasticon*, vol. I. p. 238. "Sir W. Dugdale, speaking of the Gray-friars or Franciscans at Coventry, says, before the suppression of monasteries this city was very famous for the pageants that were played therein upon Corpus Christi day; which pageants being acted with mighty state and reverence by the friers of this house, had theatres for the several scenes, very large and high, placed upon wheelles, and drawn to all the eminent parts of the city, for the better advantage of the spectators.—An ancient manuscript of the same is now to be seen in the Cottonian Library, sub. effig. Vesp. D. 8. Sir William cites this manuscript by the title of *Ludus Coventriae*; but in the printed catalogue of that library, p. 113, it is named thus: A collection of plays in old English metre; h. e. *Dramata sacra, in quibus exhibentur historiae Veteris & N. Testamenti, introductis quasi in scenam personis illic memoratis, quas secum invicem colloquentes pro ingenio fingit poeta. Videntur olim eam populo, sive ad instruendum, sive ad placendum, a fratribus mendicantibus representata.* It appears by the latter end of the prologue, that these plays or interludes were not only played at Coventry, but in other towns and places upon occasion. And possibly this may be the same play which Stow tells us was played in the reign of King Henry IV. which lasted for eight days. The book seems by the character and language to be at least 300 years old. It begins with a general prologue, giving the arguments of forty pageants or gesticulations, (which were as so many several acts or scenes,) representing all the histories of both testaments, from the creation to the chusing of St. *Matthias* to be an apostle. The stories of the New Testament are more largely expressed, viz. The Annunciation, Nativity, Visitation; but more especially all matters relating to the Passion very particularly, the Resurrection, Ascension, the choice of St. *Matthias*: after which is also represented the Assumption, and last Judgment. All these things were treated of in a very homely stile, as we now think, infinitely below the dignity of the subject: But it seems the gust of that age was not nice and delicate in these matters; the plain and incurious judgment of our ancestors, being prepared with favour, and taking every thing by the right and easiest handle: For example, in the scene relating to the Visitation:

Maria. But husband of on thyng pray you most mekeley,
I have knowing that our cosyn Elizabeth with childe is,
That it please yow to go to her hastily,
If ought we myth comfort her, it wer to me blysa.

Joseph. A Gods sake, is she with child, sche?
Than will her husband Zachary be mery.
In Montana they dwelle, fer hence, so mory the,
In the city of Juda, I know it verily;
It is hence, I trowe, myles two a fiftly;
We ar like to be wery or we come at the same.
I wole with a good will, blessyd wyff Mary;
Now go we forth then in Goddys name, &c.

A little before the resurrection.

Nant

OF HELL. The representation is, Christ entering hell triumphantly, delivering our first parents, and the most sacred characters of the old and new testaments, from the dominion of Satan, and conveying them into paradise.—The composers of the Mysteries did not think the plain and probable events of the new testament sufficiently marvellous for an audience who wanted only to be surprised. They frequently selected their materials from books which had more of the air of romance. The subject of the Mysteries just mentioned was borrowed from the *Pseudo-Evangelium*, or the *fabulous Gospel*, ascribed to Nicodemus: a book, which together with the numerous apocryphal narratives, containing infinite innovations of the evangelical history, and forged at Constantinople by the early writers of the Greek church, gave birth to an endless variety of legends concerning the life of Christ and his apostles; and which, in the barbarous ages, was better esteemed than the genuine gospel, on account of its improbabilities and absurdities."

"But whatsoever was the source of these exhibitions, they were thought to contribute so much to the information and instruction of the people on the most important subjects of religion, that one of the popes granted a pardon of one thousand days to every person who resorted peaceably to the plays

Nunc dormient milites, & veniet anima Christi de inferno, cum Adam & Eva, Abraham, John Baptist, et aliis.

Anima Christi. Come forth, Adam, and Eve with the,
And all my fryndes that herein be,
In paradys come forth with me
In blysse for to dwelle.
The fende of hell that is yowr foo,
He shall be wrappyd and woundyn in woo
Fro wo to welth now shall ye go,
With myrth ever mor to melle.

Adam. I thank the, Lord, of thy grete grace,
That now is forgiven my gret trespase,
Now shall we dwellyn in blysfyl place, &c.

The last scene or pageant, which represents the day of Judgment, begins thus:

Michael. *Surgite,* All men aryse,
Venite ad Judicium;
For now is set the High Justice,
And hath assignyd the day of dome;
Kepe you redyly to this grett assyse,
Both gret and small, all and sum,
And of your answer you now advise,
What you shall say when that yow com," &c.

Historia Hispanica, 8vo. 1699, pp. 15, 17, 18, 19.

plays performed in the Whitsun week at Chester, beginning with the creation, and ending with the general judgment; and this indulgence was seconded by the bishop of the diocese, who granted forty days of pardon: the pope at the same time denouncing the sentence of damnation on all those incorrigible sinners who presumed to disturb or interrupt the due celebration of these pious sports*. It is certain that they had their use, not only in teaching the great truths of scripture to men who could not read the bible, but in abolishing the barbarous attachment to military games, and the bloody contentions of the tournament, which had so long prevailed as the sole species of popular amusement. Rude and even ridiculous as they were, they softened the manners of the people, by diverting the public attention to spectacles in which the mind was concerned, and by creating a regard for other arts than those of bodily strength and savage valour."

I may add, that these representations were so far from being considered as indecent or profane, that even a supreme pontiff, Pope Pius the Second, about the year 1416, composed and caused to be acted before him on Corpus Christi day, a Mystery, in which was represented the *court of the king of heaven*°.

These religious dramas were usually represented on holy festivals in or near churches. "In several of our old scriptural plays," says Mr. Warton, "we see some of the scenes directed to be represented *cum cantu et organo*, a common rubric in a missal. That is, because they were performed in a church where the choir assisted. There is a curious passage in Lambard's Topographical Dictionary', written about the year 1570, much to our purpose, which I am therefore tempted to transcribe. "In the dayes of ceremonial religion, they used at Wytney (in Oxfordshire) to set fourthe yearly in maner of a shew or interlude, the resurrection of our Lord, &c. For the which purposes, and the more lyvely heareby to exhibite to the eye the hole action of the resurrection, the priestes garnished out certain small puppettes, representing the persons of Christ, the Watchman, Marie, and others; amongst the which, one bore the parte of a waking watchman, who espiinge Christe to arise, made a continual noyce like to the sound that is caused by the metynge of two sticke, and was therefore commonly called *Jack Snacker of Wytney*. The like toye I myself, beinge then a childe,

once

* Mss. Harl. 2124. 2013.

° *Histrionologia*, 4to. 1633, p. 212.

¹ P. 459, edit. 1730. 4to.

once sawe in Powles church, at London, at a feast of Whitfuntyde; wheare the comynge downe of the Holy Ghost was set forth by a white pigeone, that was let to fly out of a hole that yet is to be sene in the myddst of the roofof the great ile, and by a longe censer² which descendinge out of the same place almost to the verie grounde, was swung up and downe at such a lengthe, that it reached with thone swepe almost to the west-gate of the churche, and with the other to the quyre staires of the same; breathinge out over the whole churche and companie a most pleasant perfume of such swete thinges as burned therein. With the like doomeshevs they used everie where to furnish sondrye parts of theire church service, as by their spectacles of the nativitie, passion, and ascension³, &c.

In a preceding passage Mr. Warton has mentioned that the singing boys of Hyde Abbey and St. Swithin's Priory at Winchester performed a Mystery before king Henry the Seventh in 1487; adding, that this is the only instance he has met with of choir-boys performing in Mysteries; but it appears from the accompts of various monasteries that this was a very ancient practice, probably co-eval with the earliest attempts at dramattick representations. In the year 1378, the scholars, or choristers of St. Paul's cathedral, presented a petition to king Richard the second, praying his Majesty to prohibit some ignorant and unexperienced persons from acting the HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, to the great prejudice of the clergy of the church, who had expended considerable sums for a publick presentation of that play at the ensuing Christmas. About twelve years afterwards, the Parish Clerks of London, as Stowe informs us, performed spiritual plays at Skinner's Well for three days successively, in the presence of the king, queen, and nobles of the realm. And in 1409, the tenth year of king Henry IV. they acted at Clerkenwell for eight days successively a play, which "was matter from the creation of the world," and probably concluded with the day of judgment, in the presence of most of the nobility and gentry of England⁴.

We

² This may serve to explain a very extraordinary passage in Stowe's *Annales*, p. 690, edit. 1605: "And on the morrowe hee [King Edward the Fourth] went crowned in Paul's church in London, in the honor of God and S. Paule, and there an *Angell* came downe, and *ensed* him."

³ Warton's *HIST. OF E. P.* Vol. I. p. 240.

⁴ Probably either the Chester or Coventry Mysteries. "In the ignorant ages the Parish-clerks of London might justly be considered as a literary society. It was an essential part of their profession not only

We are indebted to Mr. Warton for some curious circumstances relative to these Miracle plays, which "appear in a roll of the Churchwardens of Bassingborne in Cambridgeshire, which is an accompt of the expences and receptions for acting the play of SAINT GEORGE at Bassingborne, on the feast of Saint Margaret, in the year 1511. They collected upwards of four pounds in twenty-seven neighbouring parishes for furnishing the play. They disbursed about two pounds in the representation. These disbursements are to four minstrels, or waits, of Cambridge, for three days, vs. vid. To the players, in bread and ale, iij*s.* ijd. To the *garment-man* for *garnements* and *propyrts* ^s; that is, for dresses, decorations, and implements, and for play-books, xx*s.* To John Hobard, *brotherhoode preeste*, that is, a priest of the guild in the church, for the *play-book*, i*j**s.* viiid. For the *croste*, or field in which the play was exhibited, j*s.* For *propyrty-making*, or furniture, j*s.* ivd. For fish and bread, and to setting up the stages, ivd. For painting three *fanchoms* and four *tormentors*, words which I do not understand, but perhaps *fantoms*, and devils - - . The rest was expended for a feast on the occasion, in which are recited ' Four chicken for the gentlemen, ivd. It appears by the

to sing, but to read; an accomplishment almost wholly confined to the clergy; and, on the whole, they seem to come under the character of a religious fraternity. They were incorporated into a guild or fellowship by king Henry the third about the year 1240, under the patronage of saint Nicholas.—Their profession, employment, and character, naturally dictated to this spiritual brotherhood the representation of plays, especially those of the scriptural kind: and their constant practice in shews, processions, and vocal musick, easily accounts for their address in detaining the best company which England afforded in the fourteenth century, at a religious farce, for more than one week." Warton's Hist. or E. P. Vol. II. p. 396.

^s "The property-room," as Mr. Warton has observed, "is yet known at our theatres."

The following list of the properties used in a Mystery formed on the story of Tobit in the Old Testament, which was exhibited in the Broadgate, Lincoln, in July 1563, (6 Eliz.) appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1787:

"Lying at Mr. Norton's house in tenure of William Smart.

"First Hell-mouth, with a nether chap. Item, A prison, with a covering. It. Sarah's chamber."

"Remaining in St. Switbin's church.

"It. A great Idol. It. A tomb with a covering. It. The city of Jerusalem with towers and pinacles. It. The city of Rages, with towers and pinacles. It. The city of Nineveh. It. The king's palace of Nipeveh. It. Old Tobyes house. It. The kyngs palace at Laches. It. A firmament with a fiery cloud, and a double cloud, in the custody of Thomas Fulbeck, Alderman."

the manuscript of the Coventry plays, that a temporary scaffold only was erected for these performances ⁶.

In the ancient religious plays the Devil was very frequently introduced. He was usually represented with horns, a very wide mouth, (by means of a mask) staring eyes, a large nose, a red beard, cloven feet, and a tail. His constant attendant was the Vice, (the buffoon of the piece,) whose principal employment it was to belabour the Devil with his wooden dagger, and to make him roar, for the entertainment of the populace ⁷.

As the *Mysteries* or *Miracle-plays* "frequently required the introduction of allegorical characters, such as Charity, Sin, Death, Hope, Faith, or the like, and as the common poetry of the times, especially among the French, began to deal much in allegory, at length plays were formed entirely consisting of such personifications. These were called *MORALITIES*. The *Miracle-plays* or *MYSTERIES* were totally destitute of invention and plan: they tamely represented stories, according to the letter of the scripture, or the respective legend. But the *MORALITIES* indicate dawnings of the dramatick art: they contain some rudiments of a plot, and even attempt to delineate characters, and to paint manners. From hence the gradual transition to real historical personages was natural and obvious ⁸."

Dr. Percy in his account of the English Stage has given an Analysis of two ancient Moralities, entitled *Every Man*, and *Lusty Juventus*, from which a perfect notion of this kind of drama may be obtained. *Every Man* was written in the reign of king Henry the Eighth, and *Lusty Juventus* in that of king Edward the Sixth. As Dr. Percy's curious and valuable collection of ancient English Poetry is in the hands of every scholar, I shall content myself with merely referring to it. Many other Moralities are yet extant, of some of which

I shall

⁶ HIST. OF E. P. Vol. III. p. 326. "Styve, under the year 1559, says, that after a grand feast at Guildhall, "the same day was a scaffold set up in the hall for a play." Ann. Ref. I. 197. edit. 1725.

⁷ "It was a pretty part in the old church-plays," says Bishop Harsenet, "when the nimble Vice would skip up nimbly like a Jacke-anapes into the Devil's necke, and ride the devil a course, and belabour him with his wooden dagger, till he made him roar, whereat the people would laugh to see the Devil so Vice-haunted." Harsenet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, &c. 4to. 1603.

⁸ Warton's HIST. OF E. P. I. p. 242. Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, Vol. I. p. 128.

I shall give the titles below ⁹. Of one, which is not now extant, we have a curious account in a book entitled "*Mount Tabor, or Private Exercises of a Penitent Sinner*, by R. W. [R. Willis.] Esqr. published in the year of his age 75, Anno Domini, 1639;" an extract from which will give the reader a more accurate notion of the old Moralities than a long dissertation on the subject.

"UPON A STAGE-PLAY, WHICH I SAW WHEN
I WAS A CHILD.

"In the city of Gloucester the manner is, (as I think it is in other like corporations,) that when players of enterludes come to towne, they first attend the Mayor, to enforme him what noble-mans servants they are, and so to get licence for their publike playing; and if the Mayor like the actors, or would shew respect to their lord and master, he appoints them to play their first play before himself and the Aldermen and Common-Counsell of the city; and that is called *the Mayors play*: where every one that will, comes in without money, the Mayor giving the players a reward as hee thinks fit to shew respect unto them. At such a play, my father tooke me with him, and made me stand between his leggs, as he sate upon one of the benches, where we saw and heard very well. The play was called *The Cradle of Security*¹, wherein was personated a king or some great prince, with his courtiers of several kinds, among which three ladies were in special grace with him; and they keeping him in delights and pleasures, drew him from his graver counsellors, hearing of sermons, and listening to good counsell and admonitions, that in the end they got him to lye down in a cradle upon the stage, where these three ladies, joyning in a sweet song, rocked him asleepe, that he snorted againe; and in the meane time closely conveyed under the cloaths wherewithall he was covered, a vizard, like a swines snout, upon his face, with three wire chains fastened thereunto, the other end whereof being holden severally by those

⁹ *Magnificence*, written by John Skelton; *Impatient Poverty*, 1560; *The Life and Repentance of Marie Magdalene*, 1567; *The Trial of Treasure*, 1567; *The Nice Wanton*, 1568; *The Disobedient Child*, no date; *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, 1570; *The Interlude of Youth*, no date; *The longer thou livest, the more Fool thou art*, no date; *The Interlude of Wealth and Health*, no date; *All for Money*, 1578; *The Conflict of Conscience*, 1581; *The three Ladies of London*, 1584; *The three Lords of London*, 1590; *Tom Tyler and his Wife*, &c.

¹ *The Cradle of Securitie* is mentioned with several other Moralities, in a play which has not been printed, entitled *Sir Thomas More*, Mss. Harl. 3768.

those three ladies ; who fall to singing againe, and then discovered his face, that the spectators might see how they had transformed him, going on with their singing. Whilst all this was acting, there came forth of another doore at the farthest end of the stage, two old men ; the one in blew, with a serjeant at armes his mace on his shoulder ; the other in red, with a drawn sword in his hand, and leaning with the other hand upon the others shoulder ; and so they two went along with a soft pace round about by the skirt of the stage, till at last they came to the cradle, when all the court was in the greatest jollity ; and then the foremost old man with his mace stroke a fearfull blow upon the cradle ; wherewith all the courtiers, with the three ladies, and the vizard, all vanished ; and the desolate prince starting up bare-faced, and finding himself thus sent for to judgment, made a lamentable complaint of his miserable case, and so was carried away by wicked spirits. This prince did personate in the Morall, the wicked of the world ; the three ladies, Pride, Covetousness, and Luxury ; the two old men, the end of the world, and the last judgement. This sight took such impressiion on me, that when I came towards mans estate, it was as fresh in my memory, as if I had seen it newly acted ²."

The writer of this book appears to have been born in the same year with our great poet (1564). Supposing him to have been seven or eight years old when he saw this interlude, the exhibition must have been in 1571 or 1572.

I am unable to ascertain when the first Morality appeared, but incline to think not sooner than the reign of king Edward the Fourth (1460). The publick pageants of the reign of king Henry the Sixth were uncommonly splendid ³ ; and being then first enlivened by the introduction of speaking allegorical personages properly and characteristically habited, they naturally led the way to those personifications by which Moralities were distinguished from the simpler religious dramas called Mysteries. We must not however suppose, that, after Moralities were introduced, Mysteries ceased to be exhibited. We have already seen that a Mystery was represented before king Henry the Seventh at Winchester in 1487. Sixteen years afterwards, on the first Sunday after the marriage of his daughter with king James of Scotland, a Morality was performed.

² *Mount Tabor, &c.* 8vo. 1639, pp. 110, et seq. With this curious extract I was favoured, several years ago, by the Rev. Mr. Bowle of Idmiston near Salisbury.

³ See Warton's *HIST. OF E. P.* Vol. II. p. 199.

formed⁴. In the early part of the reign of king Henry the Eighth they were perhaps performed indiscriminately; but Mysteries were probably seldom represented after the statute 34 and 35 Henry VIII. c. 1. which was made, as the preamble informs us, with a view that the kingdom should be purged and cleansed of all *religious plays, interludes, rhymes, ballads, and songs*, which are equally *pestiferous* and *noysome* to the commonweal. At this time both Moralities and Mysteries were made the vehicle of religious controversy; Bale's *Comedy of the three Lawes of Nature*, printed in 1538, (which in fact is a Mystery,) being a disguised satire against popery; as the Morality of *Lusty Juventus* was written expressly with the

⁴ Sir James Ware in his *Annales*, folio, 1664, after having given an account of the Statute, 33 Henry VIII. c. 1. by which Henry was declared king of Ireland, and Ireland made a kingdom, informs us, that the new law was proclaimed in St. Patrick's church, in the presence of the Lord Deputy St. Leger, and a great number of peers, who attended in their parliament robes. "It is needless," (he adds,) to mention the feasts, comedies, and sports, which followed." "*Epulas, comedias, et certamina ludicra, quæ sequebantur, quid attinet dicere?*" The mention of comedies might lead us to suppose that our sister kingdom had gone before us in the cultivation of the drama; but I find from a Ms. in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, that what are here called comedies, were nothing more than *pageants*. "In the parliament of 1541," (says the author of the memoir,) "wherein Henry VIII. was declared king of Ireland, there were present the earls of Ormond and Desmond, the lord Barry, McGilla Phædrig, chieftaine of Ossory, the son of O'Bryan, McCarthy More, with many Irish lords; and on Corpus Christi day they rode about the streets in their parliament-robes, and the Nine Worthies was played, and the Mayor bore the mace before the deputy on horseback."

Two of Bale's Mysteries, *God's Promises*, and *St. John Baptist*, we have been lately told, were acted by young men at the market-cross in Kilkenny, on a funday, in the year 1552. See Walker's *Essay on the Irish Stage*, 4to. 1789, and *Collect. de Rebus Hiber.* Vol. II. p. 388: but there is a slight error in the date. Bale has himself informed us, that he was consecrated Bishop of Ossory, February 2, 1552-3, (not on the 25th of March, as the writer of Bale's Life in *Biographia Britannica* asserts,) and that he soon afterwards went to his palace in Kilkenny. These Mysteries were exhibited there on the 20th of August, 1553, the day on which Queen Mary was proclaimed, as appears from his own account: "On the xx daye of August was the ladye Marye with us at Kilkennye proclaimed Quene of England, &c.—The yonge men in the forenone played a tragedye of *Gods Promises in the old lawe*, at the market-crosse, with organe-plainges and songes, very aptely. In the afternone agayne they played a comedie of *Sancti Johan Baptistæ* preachinges, of Christes baptisyng, and of his temptacion in the wildernesse; to the small contentacion of the prestes and other papistes there." *The Vocacion of Johan Bale*, &c. 16mo. no date. sign. C 8.

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the same view in the reign of king Edward the Sixth^s. In that of his successor queen Mary, Mysteries were again revived, as appendages to the papistical worship. "In the year 1556," says Mr. Warton, "a goodly stage-play of the *Passion of Christ* was presented at the Grey-friars in London, on Corpus-Christi day, before the Lord Mayor, the Privy-council, and many great estates of the realm. Strype also mentions, under the year 1557, a stage-play at the Grey-friers, of the *Passion of Christ*, on the day that war was proclaimed in London against France, and in honour of that occasion. On Saint Olave's day in the same year, the holiday of

The only theatre in Dublin in the reign of queen Elizabeth was a booth (if it may be called a theatre) erected in Hoggin Green, now College Green, where Mysteries and Moralities were occasionally performed. It is strange, that so lately as in the year 1600, at a time when many of Shakspeare's plays had been exhibited in England, and lord Montjoy, the intimate friend of his patrons, lord Essex and lord Southampton, was Deputy of Ireland, the old play of *Gorboduck*, written in the infancy of the stage, (for this piece had been originally presented in 1362, under the name of *Ferrex and Porrex*,) should have been performed at the Castle of Dublin: but such is the fact, if we may believe Chetwood the prompter, who mentions that old Mr. Ashbury had seen a bill dated the 7th of September 1601, (queen Elizabeth's birth-day,) "*for wax tapers for the play of Gorboduck done at the Castle, one and twenty shillings and two groats*." Whether any plays were represented in Dublin in the reign of James the First, I am unable to ascertain. Barnaby Riche, who has given a curious account of Dublin in the year 1610, makes no mention of any theatrical exhibition. In 1635, when lord Strafford was Lord Lieutenant, a theatre, probably under his patronage, was built in Werburgh-street; which, under the conduct of the well known John Ogilby, Master of the Revels in Ireland, continued open until October 1641, when it was shut up by order of the Lords Justices. At this theatre Shirley's *Royal Master* was originally represented in 1639, and Burnell's *Landgartha* in 1641. In 1662 Ogilby was restored to his office, and a new theatre was erected in Orange-street, (since called Smock-Alley) part of which fell down in the year 1671. *Agrippa, King of Alba*, a tragedy translated from the French of Quinault, was acted there before the duke of Ormond, in 1675; and it continued open, I believe, till the death of king Charles the Second. The disturbances which followed in Ireland put an end for a time to all theatrical entertainments.

5 "This mode of attack" (as Mr. Warton has observed) "was seldom returned by the opposite party: the catholick worship founded on sensible representations afforded a much better hold for ridicule, than the religion of some of the sects of the reformers, which was of a more simple and spiritual nature." HIST. OF E. P. Vol. II. p. 378, n. The interlude, however, called *Every Man*, which was written in defence of the church of Rome, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, is an exception. It appears also from a proclamation promulgated early in the reign of his son, of which mention will be made hereafter, that the favourers of popery about that time had levelled several dramattick invectives against Archbishop Cranmer, and the doctrines of the reformers.

of the church in Silver-street which is dedicated to that saint, was kept with much solemnity. At eight of the clock at night, began a stage-play of *goodly matter*, being the miraculous history of the life of that saint, which continued four hours, and concluded with many religious songs⁶. No Mysteries, I believe, were represented during the reign of Elizabeth, except such as were occasionally performed by those who were favourers of the popish religion⁷, and those already mentioned, known by the name of the Chester Mysteries, which had been originally composed in 1328, were revived in the time of king Henry the Eighth, (1533,) and again performed at Chester in the year 1600. The last Mystery, I believe, ever represented in England, was that of *Cbrist's Passion*, in the reign of king James the First, which Prynne tells us was "performed at Elie-House in Holborne, when Gundomar lay there, on Good-friday at night, at which there were thousands present⁸."

In France the representation of Mysteries was forbid in the year 1548, when the fraternity associated under the name of *The Actors of our Saviour's Passion*, who had received letters patent from king Charles the Sixth in 1402, and had for near 150 years exhibited religious plays, built their new theatre on the site of the duke of Burgundy's house; and were authorised by an Arret of parliament to act, on condition that "they should meddle with none but profane subjects, such as are lawful and honest, and not represent any sacred Mysteries⁹." Representations founded on holy writ continued to be exhibited in Italy till the year 1660, and the Mystery of Christ's Passion was represented at Vienna so lately as the early part of the present century.

Having thus occasionally mentioned foreign theatres, I take this opportunity to observe, that the stages of France so lately as in the beginning of queen Elizabeth's reign were entirely unfurnished with scenery or any kind of decoration, and that the performers at that time remained on the stage the whole time of the exhibition; in which mode perhaps our Mysteries

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⁶ HIST. OF E. P. Vol. III. p. 326.

⁷ That Mysteries were occasionally represented in the early part of queen Elizabeth's reign appears from the assertions of the controversial writers. "They play" (says one of them) and counterfeite the whole Passion so trimly, with all the seven sorowes of our lady, as though it had been nothing else but a simple and plain enterlude, to make boyes laugh at, and a little to recreate sorowful harts." *Bechive of the Romishe Churche*, 1580, p. 207. See also *supra*, p. 19. n. 3.

⁸ *Histrionastix*, quarto, 1633, p. 117. n.

⁹ Riccoboni's *Account of the Theatres of Europe*, 8vo. 1741, p. 114.

in England were represented. For this information we are indebted to the elder Scaliger, in whose *Poeticks* is the following curious passage. "*Nunc in Gallia ita agunt fabulas, ut omnia in conspectu sint; UNIVERSUS APPARATUS dispositis sublimibus sedibus. Personæ ipsæ nunquam discedunt: qui silent pro absentibus habentur.* At enimvero perridiculum, ibi spectatorem videre te audire, et te videre teipsum non audire quæ alius coram te de te loquatur; quasi ibi non sis, ubi es: cum tamen maxima poetæ vis sit, suspendere animos, atque eos facere semper expectantes. At hic tibi novum fit nihil; ut prius satietas subperat, quam obrepat fames. Itaque recte objecit Æschylo Euripides apud Aristophanem in *Ranis*, quod Niobem et Achillem in scenam introduxisset capite co-operto; neque nunquam ullum verbum qui sint loquuti."

That is, "At present in France [about the year 1556] plays are represented in such a manner, that nothing is withdrawn from the view of the spectator. The whole apparatus of the theatre consists of some high seats ranged in proper order. The persons of the scene never depart during the representation: he who ceases to speak, is considered as if he were no longer on the stage. But in truth it is extremely ridiculous, that the spectator should see the actor listening, and yet he himself should not hear what one of his fellow-actors says concerning him, though in his own presence and within his hearing: as if he were absent, while he is present. It is the great object of the dramatick poet to keep the mind in a constant state of suspense and expectation. But in our theatres, there can be no novelty, no surprise: insomuch that the spectator is more likely to be satiated with what he has already seen, than to have any appetite for what is to come. Upon this ground it was, that Euripides objected to Æschylus, in *The Frogs* of Aristophanes, for having introduced Niobe and Achilles as

mutes

¹ Jul. Cæs. Scaligeri *Poetices Libri Septem*. Folio, 1561. l. i. c. 21. Julius Caesar Scaliger died at Agen, in the province of Guienne in France, on the 21st of October, 1558, in the 75th year of his age. He wrote his *Poeticks* in that town a few years before his death.

Riccoboni gives us the same account in his *History of the French Theatre*. "In the representations of the Mysteries, the theatre represented paradise, hell, heaven, and earth, all at once; and though the action varied, there was no change of the decorations. After an actor had performed his part, he did not go off the stage, but retired to a corner of it, and sat there in full view of all the spectators." *Historical and Critical Account of the Theatres in Europe*, octavo, 1741, p. 118. We shall presently see that at a much later period, and long after the Mysteries had ceased to be exhibited, "though the action changed, there was no change of decoration," either in France or England.

mutes upon the scene, with a covering which entirely concealed their heads from the spectators."

Another practice, equally extraordinary, is mentioned by Bulenger in his treatise on the Grecian and Roman theatres. In his time, so late as in the year 1600, all the actors employed in a dramatick piece came on the stage in a troop, before the play began, and presented themselves to the spectators, in order, says he, to raise the expectation of the audience. "Putem tamen (*quod bodieque fit*) omnes actores antequam singuli agerent, confestim et in turba in proscenium prodissse, ut sui expectationem commoverent²." I know not whether this was ever practised in England. Instead of raising, it should seem more likely to repress, expectation. I suppose, however, this writer conceived the audience would be animated by the *number* of the characters, and that this display would operate on the gaping spectators like some of our modern enormous play-bills; in which the length of the show sometimes constitutes the principal merit of the entertainment.

Mr. Warton observes that Moralities were become so fashionable a spectacle about the close of the reign of Henry the Seventh, that "John Rastall, a learned typographer, brother-in-law to Sir Thomas More, extended its province, which had been hitherto confined either to moral allegory, or to religion blended with buffoonery, and conceived a design of making it the vehicle of science and philosophy. With this view he published *A new INTERLUDE and a mery, of the nature of the iiij Elements, declaring many proper points of philosophy naturall, and dyvers straunge landys, &c.* In the cosmographical part of the play, in which the poet professes to treat of *dyvers straunge landys, and of the new-found landys*, the tracts of America recently discovered, and the manners of the natives, are described. The characters are, a Messenger, who speaks the prologue, Nature, Humanity, Studious Desire, Sensual Appetite, a Taverner, Experience, and Ignorance³."

As it is uncertain at what period of time the ancient Mysteries ceased to be represented as an ordinary spectacle for the amusement of the people, and Moralities were substituted in their room, it is equally difficult to ascertain the precise time when

² Bulengeri de *Theatro*, 8vo. 1600. l. i. p. 60. b.

³ HIST. OF E. P. Vol. II. p. 364. "Dr. Percy supposes this play to have been written about the year 1510, from the following lines:

" — Within this xx yere

" Westwarde he found new landes

" That we never harde tell of before this."

The West-Indies were discovered by Columbus in 1492." Ibid.

when the latter gave way to a more legitimate theatrical exhibition. We know that Moralities were exhibited occasionally during the whole of the reign of queen Elizabeth, and even in that of her successor, long after regular dramas had been presented on the scene⁴; but I suspect that about the year 1570 (the 13th year of queen Elizabeth) this species of drama began to lose much of its attraction, and gave way to something that had more the appearance of comedy and tragedy. *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, which was written by Mr. Sill, (afterwards bishop of Bath and Wells,) in the 23d year of his age, and acted at Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1566, is pointed out by the ingenious writer of the tract entitled *Historia Histrionica*, as the first piece "that looks like a regular comedy;" that is, the first play that was neither Mystery nor Morality, and in which some humour and discrimination of character may be found. In 1561-2 Thomas Sackville lord Buckhurst, and Thomas Norton, joined in writing the tragedy of *Ferrex and Porrex*, which was exhibited on the 18th of January in that year by the Students of the Inner Temple, before queen Elizabeth at Whitehall. Neither of these pieces appears to have been acted on a publick theatre, nor was there at that time any building in London constructed solely for the purpose of representing plays. Of the latter piece, which, as Mr. Warton has observed, is perhaps "the first specimen in our language of an heroick tale written in verse, and divided into acts and scenes, and clothed in all the formalities of a regular tragedy," a correct analysis may be found in the HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY⁵, and the play itself within these few years has been accurately reprinted.

It has been justly remarked by the same judicious writer, that the early practice of performing plays in schools and universities greatly contributed to the improvement of our drama. "While the people were amused with Skelton's *Trial of Simony*, Bale's *God's Promises*, and *Christ's Descent into Hell*, the scholars of the times were composing and acting plays on historical subjects, and in imitation of Plautus and Terence. Hence ideas of legitimate fable must have been imperceptibly derived to the popular and vernacular drama⁶."

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⁴ The licence granted in 1603 to Shakspeare and his fellow-comedians, authorises them to play comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morals, pastorals, &c. See also *The Gulls Hornetbooke*, 1609: "— if in the middle of his play, (bee it pastoral or comedie, morall or tragedie,) you rise with a shrewd and discontented face," &c.

⁵ Vol. III. pp. 355, et seq.

⁶ Hist. of E. P. II. p. 388.

In confirmation of what he has suggested, it may be observed, that the principal dramattick writers, before Shakspeare appeared, were scholars. Greene, Lodge, Peele, Marlowe, Nashe, Lily, and Kyd, had all a regular university education. From whatever cause it may have arisen, the dramattick poetry about this period certainly assumed a better, though still an exceptionable, form. The example which had been furnished by Sackville was quickly followed, and a great number of tragedies and historical plays was produced between the years 1570 and 1590; some of which are still extant, though by far the greater part is lost. This, I apprehend, was the great æra of those bloody and bombastick pieces, which afforded subsequent writers perpetual topicks of ridicule: and during the same period were exhibited many *Histories*, or historical dramas, formed on our English Chronicles, and representing a series of events simply in the order of time in which they happened. Some have supposed that Shakspeare was the first dramattick poet that introduced this species of drama; but this is an undoubted error. I have elsewhere observed that every one of the subjects on which he constructed his historical plays, appears to have been dramatized, and brought upon the scene, before his time. The historical drama is by an elegant

7 Goffson in his *Plays Confuted in five actions*, printed about the year 1580, says, "In playes either those things are fained that never were, as *Cupid and Psyche*, plaid at Pauls; [he means, in Paul's school,]—or if a true historie be taken in hand, it is made like our shavelings, longest at the rising and falling of the sunne." From the same writer we learn, that many preceding dramattick poets had travelled over the ground in which the subjects of several of Shakspeare's other plays may be found. "I may boldly say it, (says Goffson) because I have seene it, that the *Palace of Pleasure*, the *Golden Asse*, the *Æthiopian Historie*, *Amadis of Fraunce*, the *Round table*, bawdie comedies in Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish, have beene thoroughly ranfackt to furnish the playe-houses in London." Signat. D 5. b.

Lodge, his antagonist in this controversy, in his *Play of plays and pastimes*, a work which I have never seen, urges, as Prynne informs us, in defence of plays, that "they dilucidate and well explain many darke obscure histories, imprinting them in men's minds in such indelible characters that they can hardly be obliterated." *Histriomastix*, p. 940. See also Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, 1612: "Plays have made the ignorant more apprehensive, taught the unlearned the knowledge of many famous histories; instructed such as cannot reade, in the discovery of our *English Chronicles*: and what man have you now of that weak capacity that cannot discourse of any notable thing recorded, even from *William the Conqueror*, nay from the landing of Brute, untill this day, being possesse of their true use?"—In Florio's dialogues, in Italian and English, printed in 1591, we have the following dialogue:

"G. After

elegant modern writer supposed to have owed its rise to the publication of *The Mirror for Magistrates*, in which many of the most distinguished characters in English history are introduced, giving a poetical narrative of their own misfortunes⁸. Of this book three editions, with various alterations and improvements, were printed between 1563 and 1587.

At length (about the year 1591) the great luminary of the dramattick world blazed out, and our poet produced those plays which have now for two hundred years been the boast and admiration of his countrymen.

Our earliest dramas, as we have seen, were represented in churches, or near them by ecclesiasticks: but at a very early period, I believe, we had regular and established players, who obtained a livelihood by their art. So early as in the year 1378, as has been already noticed, the singing-boys of St. Paul's represented to the king, that they had been at considerable expence in preparing a stage representation at Christmas. These, however, cannot properly be called comedians, nor am I able to point out the time when the profession of a player became common and established. It has been supposed that the license granted by queen Elizabeth to James Burbage and others, in 1574, was the first regular license ever granted to comedians in England; but this is a mistake, for Heywood informs us that similar licenses had been granted by her father king Henry the Eighth, king Edward the Sixth, and queen Mary. Stowe records, that "when king Edward the Fourth would shew himself in state to the view of the people, he repaired to his palace at St. John's, where he was accustomed to see the *City Actors*⁹." In two books in the Remembrancer's-office in the Exchequer, containing an account of the daily expences of king Henry the Seventh, are the following articles; from which it appears that at that

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time

"G. After dinner we will goe see a play.

H. The plaies that they play in England are not right comedies.

T. Yet they do nothing else but plaie every daye.

H. Yea, but they are neither right comedies, nor right tragedies.

G. How would you name them then?

H. Representations of *hystories*, without any decorum."

⁸ Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, Vol. I. p. 166.

⁹ *Apology for Actors*, 4to. 1612, Signat. E 1. b. "Since then," adds Heywood, "that house by the princes free gift hath belonged to the office of the Revels, where our court playes have been in *late dayes* yearly rehearsed, perfected, and corrected, before they come to the publike view of the prince and the nobility." This house must have been chosen on account of its neighbourhood to Whitehall, where the royal theatre then was. The regular office of the Revels at that time was on St. Peter's hill, near the Blackfriars' playhouse.

time players, both French and English, made a part of the appendages of the court, and were supported by regal establishment.

"*Item*, to Hampton of Worcester for making of balades, 20s. *Item*, to my ladye the kings moders poete, 66s. 8d. *Item*, to a Welsh Rymmer, in reward, 13s. 4d. *Item*, to my Lord Privie-Seals sole, in rew. 10s. *Item*, to Pachye the sole, for a rew. 6s. 8d. *Item*, to the foolish duke of Lancaster, 3s. *Item*, to Dix the soles master, for a months wages, 10s. *Item*, to the King of Frances sole, in rew. 4l. *Item*, to the *Frenshe* players, in rew. 20s. *Item*, to the tumbler upon the ropes, 20s. *Item*, for heling of a seke maid, 6s. 8d. [Probably the piece of gold given by the king in touching for the evil.] *Item*, to my lord princes organ-player, for a quarters wages at Michell, 10s. *Item*, to the players of London, in reward, 10s. *Item*, to Master Barnard, the blind poete, 100s. *Item*, to a man and woman for straw-berries, 8s. 4d. *Item*, to a woman for a red rose, 2s." The foregoing extracts are from a book of which almost every page is signed by the king's own hand, in the 13th year of his reign. The following are taken from a book which contains an account of expences in the 9th year of his reign. "*Item*, to Cart for writing of a booke, 6s. 8d. *Item*, payd for two playes in the hall, 26s. 8d. *Item*, to the kings players for a reward, 100s. *Item*, to the king to play at cardes, 100s. *Item*, lost to my lord Morging at buttes, 6s. 8d. *Item*, to Harry Pyning, the king's godson, in reward, 20s. *Item*, to the players that begged by the way, 6s. 8d *."

Some of these articles I have preserved as curious, though they do not relate to the subject immediately before us. This account ascertains, that there was then not only a regular troop of players in London, but also a royal company. The intimate knowledge of the French language and manners which Henry must have acquired during his long sojourn in foreign courts, (from 1471 to 1485,) accounts for the article relative to the company of French players.

In a Manuscript in the Cottonian library in the Museum, a narrative is given of the shews and ceremonies exhibited at Christmas in the fifth year of the king's reign, 1490. "This Cristmas I saw no disgyfyngs, and but *right few* plays; but ther was an abbot of mis-rule, that made much sport, and did right well his office.—On Candell Mass day, the king, the quene, my ladye the kings moder, with the substance of

* For these extracts I am indebted to Francis Grose, esq. to whom every admirer of the venerable remains of English antiquity has the highest obligations.

al the lordes temporell present at the parlement, &c. wenten a proceſſion from the chapell into the hall, and ſob into Weſt-mynſter Hall:—The kyng was that day in a riche gowne of purple, pired withe gold, furred wythe ſabuls.—At nyght the king, the qwené, and my ladye the kyngs moder, came into the Whit hall, and ther had a *pley*.—“On New-yeeres day at nyght, (ſays the ſame writer, ſpeaking of the year 1488,) ther was a goodly diſgyſing, and alſo this Crilinaſs ther wer many and dyvers *playes*.”

A proclamation which was iſſued out in the year 1547 by king Edward the Sixth, to prohibit for about two monthſ the exhibition of “any kind of interlude, play, dialogue, or other matter ſet forth in the form of a play, in the Engliſh tongue,” deſcribes plays as a familiar entertainment, both in London, and in the country⁹; and the profeſſion of an actor as common and eſtabliſhed. “Foraſmuch as a great number of thoſe that be *common players of interludes and playes*, as well within the city of London as elſewhere within the realme, doe for the moſt part play ſuch interludes as contain matter tending to ſedition⁸,” &c. By *common players of interludes* here mentioned, I apprehend, were meant the players of the city, as contradistinguished from the king’s own ſervants. In a Manuſcript which I ſaw ſome years ago, and which is now in the Library of the Marquis of Lanſdown, are ſundry charges for the players belonging to king Edward the Sixth; but I have not preſerved the articles. And in the houſehold-book of queen Mary, in the Library of the Antiquarian Society, is an entry which ſhews that ſhe alſo had a theatrical eſtabliſhment: “Eight players of interludes, each, 66s. 8d.—26l. 13s. 4d.”

It has already been mentioned that originally plays were performed in churches. Though Bonner biſhop of London iſſued a proclamation to the clergy of his diocèſe in 1542, prohibiting “all manner of common plays, games, or interludes,

⁸ Leland. Collect. Vol. IV. Append. pp. 235, 256. edit. 1774.

⁹ Itinerant companies of actors are probably coeval with the firſt riſe of the Engliſh ſtage. King Henry the Seventh’s bounty to ſome ſtrolling players has been mentioned in the preceding page. In 1556, the fourth year of queen Mary, a remonſtrance was iſſued from the privy-council to the lord Preſident of the North, ſtating, “that certain lewd [wicked or diſſolute] perſons, naming themſelves to be the ſervants of Sir Francis Lake, and wearing his livery or badge on their ſleeves, have wandered about theſe north parts, and repreſenting certain plays and interludes, reflecting on the queen and her conſort, and the formalities of the maſs.” Strype’s *Memorials*, Vol. III. Append. III. p. 185.

¹ Fuller’s *Church Hiſt.* B. VII. p. 390.

ludes, to be played, set forth, or declared within their churches, chapels," &c. the practice seems to have been continued occasionally during the reign of queen Elizabeth; for the author of *The Third Blast of retrait from plays and players* complains, in 1580, that "the players are permitted to publish their mammetrie in every temple of God, and that throughout England;" &c. and this abuse is taken notice of in one of the Canons of King James the First, given soon after his accession in the year 1603. Early however in Queen Elizabeth's reign the established players of London began to act in temporary theatres constructed in the yards of inns²; and about the year 1570, I imagine, one or two regular playhouses were erected³. Both the theatre in Blackfriars and that in Whitefriars were certainly built before 1580; for we learn from a puritanical pamphlet published in the last century, that soon after that year, "many goodly citizens and well disposed gentlemen of London, considering that play-houses and dicing-houses were traps for young gentlemen, and others, and perceiving that many inconveniencies and great damage would ensue upon the long suffering of the same,—acquainted some pious magistrates therewith,—who thereupon made humble suite to Queene Elizabeth and her privy-councell, and obtained leave from her majesty to thrust the players out of the city, and to pull down all playhouses and dicing-houses within their liberties; which accordingly was effected, and the playhouses in Gracious-street, Bishopsgate-street, that nigh Paul's, that on Ludgate-hill, and the White friers, were quite pulled down and suppressed by the care of these religious senators⁴." The theatre in Blackfriars, not being within the liberties of the city of London,

² "In proceſs of time it [playing] became an occupation, and many there were that followed it for a livelihood, and, what was worſe, it became the occasion of much ſin and evil; great multitudes of people, eſpecially youth, in queen Elizabeth's reign, reſorting to theſe plays: and being commonly acted on Sundays and Feſtivals, the churches were forſaken, and the playhouſes thronged. Great inns were uſed for this purpoſe, which had ſecret chambers and places, as well as open ſtages and galleries." *Strype's Additions to Stowe's Survey*, folio 1720. Vol. I. p. 247.

³ "In playes either thoſe things are fained that never were, as *Cupid and Psyche*, played at Paules, [the ſchool-room of St. Paul's,] and a great many comedies more at the *Blackfriars*, and in every playhouſe in London, which for brevity ſake I over-ſkippe; or," &c. *Plays confuted, in free Actions*, by Stephen Goſſon, no date, but printed about the year 1580.

⁴ Richard Reulidge's *Monſter lately found out and diſcovered, or the ſwearing of Tipplers*, 1628, pp. 2, 3, 4. What he calls the theatres in Gracious-street, Biſhopsgate-street, and Ludgate-hill, were the temporary ſcaffolds erected at the Croſs-Keys Inn in Gracechurch-street, the Bull in Biſhopsgate-street, and the Bell-Savage on Ludgate-hill. "That nigh Paul's," was St. Paul's ſchool-room, behind the Convocation-houſe.

London, escaped the fury of these fanaticks. Elizabeth, however, though she yielded in this instance to the frenzy of the time, was during the whole course of her reign a favourer of the stage, and a frequent attendant upon plays. So early as in the year 1569, as we learn from another puritanical writer, the children of her chapel, (who are described as "her majesty's unfledged minions,") "flaunted it in their filkes and fattens," and acted plays on profane subjects in the chapel-royal⁵. In 1574 she granted a licence to James Burbage, probably the father of the celebrated tragedian, and four others, servants to the earl of Leicester, to exhibit all kind of stage-plays, during pleasure, in any part of England, "as well for the recreation of her loving subjects, as for her own solace and pleasure when she should think good to see them⁶;" and in the year 1583, soon after a furious attack had been made

⁵ "Even in her majesties chapel do these pretty upstart youthes prophane the Lordes-day by the lascivious writhing of their tender limbs, and gorgeous decking of their apparell, in feigning bawdie fables, gathered from the idolatrous heathen poets," &c. *The Children of the Chapel fript and whipt*, 1569, fol. xiii. b. These children acted frequently in Queen Elizabeth's reign at the theatre in Whitechurche.

⁶ For the notice of this ancient theatrical licence we are indebted to Mr. Steevens. It is found among the unpublished collections of Rymer, which were purchased by parliament, and are deposited in the British Museum. Ascoug's Catalogue of Sloanian and other manuscripts, N^o 4625.

"*Pro Jacobo Burbage et aliis, de licentia speciali.*"

"Elizabeth by the grace of God, queene of England, &c. To all justices, mayors, sheriffes, baylyffes, head constables, under constables, and all other our officers and mynisters, gretinge.

Know ye, that we of our especiall grace, certen knowledge, and mere motion, have licensed and auctorised, and by these presents do lyense and auctorise our lovinge subjectes James Burbage, John Perkyne, John Lanham, William Johnson, and Robert Wilson, servants to our trustie and well beloved cosen and counseyllour the Earle of Leycester, to use, exercyse and occupie the arte and facultye of playenge commedies, tragedies, enterludes, stage-playes, and suche other like as they have alredie used and studied, or hereafter shall use and studie, as well for the recreation of our lovinge subjectes as for our solace and pleasure when we shall thinke good to see them, as also to use and occupie all suche instrumentes as they have alredie practised or hereafter shall practise, for and duringe our pleasure; and the said commedies, tragedies, enterludes, and stage-plaies, together with their musicke, to shew, publishe, exercise and occupie to their best commoditie, during all the terme aforesaide, as well within the liberties and freedoms of anye our cities, townes, bouroughs, &c. whatsoever, as without the same, thoroughoute our realme of England. Wyllinge and commaundinge yowe and every of you, as ye tender our pleasure, to permit and suffer them herein withoute anye lettes, hynderaunce, or molestation, duringe the terme aforesaide,

made on the stage by the puritans, twelve of the principal comedians of that time, at the earnest request of Sir Francis Walsingham, were selected from the companies then subsisting under the licence and protection of various noblemen⁷, and were sworn her majesty's servants⁸. Eight of them had an annual

aforesaide, any acte, statute, or proclamation or commaundement heretofore made or hereafter to be made notwithstandinge; provided that the saide commedies, tragedies, enterludes and stage-playes be by the Master of our Revelle for the tyme beyng before sene and allowed; and that the same be not published or shewen in the tyme of common prayer or in the tyme of greute and common plague in our saide citye of London. In wytnes whereof, &c.

Wytnes our selfe at Westminster the 10th daye of Maye. [1574]

Per breve de privato sigillo.

Mr. Steevens supposed that Mr. Doddsley was inaccurate in saying in the preface to his Collection of Old Plays, p. 22, that "the first company of players we have any account of in history are the children of Paul's in 1578," four years subsequent to the above licence. But the figures 1578 in that page are merely an error of the press for 1573, as may be seen by turning to a former page of Mr. Doddsley's preface, to which, in page 22, he himself refers.

⁷ The servants of the earls of Derby, Pembroke, and Essex; those of the Lord Chamberlain; the servants of the Lord Admiral (Nottingham); those of Lord Strange, Lord Sussex, Lord Worcester, &c.—By the statute 39 Eliz. c. 4. noblemen were authorized to license players to act both in town and country; the statute declaring "that all common players of interludes *wandering abroad*, other than players of interludes belonging to anie baron of this realme, or anie other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seale of arms of such baron or personage, shall be adjudged and deemed rogues and vagabonds."

This statute has been frequently mis-stated, by Prynne and others, as if it declared *all* players (except noblemen's servants) to be rogues and vagabonds: whereas it was only made against *strolling* players.

Long after the playhouses called the Theatre and the Curtain had been built, and during the whole reign of Elizabeth, the companies belonging to different noblemen, acted occasionally at the Cross-Keys in Gracechurch-street, and other inns, and also in the houses of noblemen at weddings and other festivals.

⁸ "Comedians and stage-players of former time were very poor and ignorant in respect of these of this time; but being now [in 1583] grown very skillfull and exquisite actors for all matters, they were entertained into the service of divers great lords; out of which companies there were twelve of the best chosen, and, at the request of Sir Francis Walsingham, they were sworne the queenes servants, and were allowed wages and liveries as groomes of the chamber; and untill this yeare 1583, the queene had no players. Among these twelve players were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quicke, delicate, refined, extemporal witt, and Richard Tarleton for a wondrous plentiful pleasant extemporal witt, he was the wonder of his tyme.—He lieth buried in Shoreditch church." "He was so beloved," adds the writer in a note^d, "that

annual stipend of 3l. 6s. 8d. each^o. At that time there were eight companies of comedians, each of which performed twice or thrice a week¹.

King James the First appears to have patronized the stage with as much warmth as his predecessor. In 1599, while he was yet in Scotland, he solicited queen Elizabeth (if we may believe a modern historian) to send a company of English comedians to Edinburgh; and very soon after his accession to the throne, granted the following licence to the company at the Globe, which is found in Rymer's *Fadera*.

"Pro LAURENTIO FLETCHER & WILLIELMO SHAKSPEARE & alijs.

A. D. 1603. *Pat.*

1. Jac. P. 2, m. 4. James by the grace of God, &c. to all justices, maiors, sheriffs, constables, headboroughs, and

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other

"that men use his picture for their signes." Stowe's Chron. published by Howes, sub. ann. 1583, edit. 1615.

The above paragraph was not written by Stowe, not being found in the last edition of his Chronicle published in his life-time, 4to. 1663: and is an interpolation by his Continuator, Edmund Howes.

Richard Tarleton, as appears by the register of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, was buried there, September the third, 1588.

The following extract from Strype shews in how low a state the stage was at this time:

"Upon the ruin of Paris Garden, [the fall of a scaffold there in January 1583-4] suit was made to the Lords [of the Council] to banish plays wholly in the places near London: and letters were obtained of the Lords to banish them on the Sabbath days.

Upon these orders against the players, the *Queen's players* petitioned the Lords of the Council, That whereas the time of their service drew very near, so that of necessity they must needs have exercise to enable them the better for the same, and also for their better keep and relief in their poor livings, the season of the year being past to play at any of the houses without the city: Their humble petition was, that the Lords would vouchsafe to read a few articles annexed to their supplication, and in consideration [that] the matter contained the very stay and state of their living, to grant unto them confirmation of the same, or of as many as should be to their honours good liking; and withal, their favourable letters to the Lord Maior, to permit them to exercise within the city; and that their letters might contain some orders to the justices of Middlesex in their behalf." Strype's *Additions to Stowe's Survey*, Vol. 1. p. 248.

^o Household-book of Queen Elizabeth in 1584 in the Museum, Mss. Sloan. 3194. The Continuator of Stowe says, she had no players before, (see n. 8,) but I suspect that he is mistaken, for Q. Mary, and K. Edward the Sixth, both had players on their establishments. See p. 35.

¹ "For reckoning with the leaste the gaine that is reaped of eight ordinarie places in the citie, (which I know) by playing but once a weeke, (whereas many times they play twice, and sometimes thrice,) it amounteth to two thousand pounds by the year. *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse*, by John Stockwood, 1578.

other our officers and loving subjects, greeting. Know you that wee, of our special grace, certaine knowledge, and meer motion, have licensed and authorised, and by these presentes doe licence and authorize theise our servaunts, Laurence Fletcher, WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, Richard Burbage, Augustine Philippes, John Hemings, Henrie Condel, William Sly, Robert Armin, Richard Cowly, and the rest of their associates, freely to use and exercise the arte and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morales, pastorals, stage-plaies, and such like other as theie have already studied or hereafter shall use or studie, as well for the recreation of our loving subjects, as for our solace and pleasure when we shall thincke good to see them, during our pleasure: and the said comedies, tragedies, histories, enterludes, morales, pastorals, stage-plaies, and such like, to shew and exercise, publicquely to their best commoditie, when the infection of the plague shall decrease, as well within their nowe usuall house called the Globe, within our county of Surrey, as also within anie toun-halls or moute-halls, or other convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other citie, universitie, toun, or boroughe whatsoever, within our said realmes and dominions. Willing and commanding you and everie of you, as you tender our pleasure, not onlie to permit and suffer them herein, without any your letts, hindrances, or molestations, during our pleasure, but also to be aiding or assistinge to them if any wrong be to them offered, and to allow them such former curtesies as hath bene given to men of their place and qualitie; and also what further favour you shall shew to theise our servaunts for our sake, we shall take kindlie at your handes. In witness whereof, &c.

Witness our selfe at Westminster, the nynteenth daye of Maye.

Per Breve de privato sigillo."

HAVING

HAVING now, as concisely as I could, traced the history of the English Stage, from its first rude state to the period of its maturity and greatest splendour, I shall endeavour to exhibit as accurate a delineation of the internal form and economy of our ancient theatres, as the distance at which we stand, and the obscurity of the subject, will permit.

The most ancient English playhouses of which I have found any account, are, the playhouse in *Blackfriars*, that in *Whitefriars*¹, the *Theatre*, of which I am unable to ascertain the situation², and *The Curtain* in *Shoreditch*.

¹ There was a theatre in *Whitefriars*, before the year 1580. See p. 36. *A Woman's a Weathercock* was performed at the private playhouse in *Whitefriars* in 1612. This theatre was, I imagine, either in *Salisbury-court* or the narrow street leading into it. From an extract taken by Sir Henry Herbert from the office-book of Sir George Buc, his predecessor in the office of Master of the Revels, it appears that the theatre in *Whitefriars* was either rebuilt in 1613, or intended to be re-built. The entry is: "July 13, 1613, for a license to erect a new playhouse in the *White-friers*, &c. £ 20." I doubt however whether this scheme was then carried into execution, because a new playhouse was erected in *Salisbury-court* in 1629. That theatre probably was not on the site of the old theatre in *Whitefriars*, for *Prynne* speaks of it as then *newly built*, not *re-built*; and in the same place he mentions the *re-building* of the *Fortune* and *Red Bull* theatres.—Had the old theatre in *Whitefriars* been pulled down and re-built, he would have used the same language with respect to them all. *The Rump*, a comedy by *Tatham*, was acted in 1660, in the theatre in *Salisbury-court* (that built in 1629). About the year 1670 a new theatre was erected there, (but whether on the site of that last mentioned I cannot ascertain,) known by the name of the Theatre in *Dorset Gardens*, to which the Duke of York's Company under the conduct of Sir William D'Avenant's widow removed from *Lincoln's Inn fields* in 1671. The former play-house in *Salisbury-court* could hardly have fallen into decay in so short a period as forty years; but I suppose was found too small for the new scenery introduced after the Restoration. The Prologue to *Wycherley's Gentleman Dancing-Master*, printed in 1673, is addressed "To the city, newly after the removal of the Duke's Company from *Lincoln's Inn fields* to their new theatre near *Salisbury-court*."

Maitland in his *History of London*, p. 963, after mentioning *Dorset Stairs*, adds, "near to which place stood the theatre or playhouse, a neat building, having a curious front next the Thames, with an open place for the reception of coaches."

² It was probably situated in some remote and privileged place, being, I suppose, hinted at in the following passage of a sermon by John Stockwood,

ditch³. *The Theatre*, from its name, was probably the first building erected in or near the metropolis purposely for scenick exhibitions.

In the time of Shakspeare there were seven principal theatres; three private houses, namely, that in *Blackfriars*, that in *Whitefriars*, and *The Cockpit* or *Phoenix*⁴, in Drury-Lane; and four that were called publick theatres; viz. *The Globe* on the Bankside, *The Curtain*⁵ in Shoreditch, *The Red*

Stockwood, quoted below, and preached in 1578: "Have we not houses of purpose built with great charges for the maintenance of them, [the players,] and that *without the liberties*, as who shall say, there, let them say what they will, we will play. I know not how I might, with the godly-learned especially, more discommend the gorgeous playing-place *erected in the fields*, than to term it, as they please to have is called, a *Theatre*."

³ *The Theatre* and *The Curtain* are mentioned in "A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse on St. Bartholomew day, being the 24th of August, 1578, by John Stockwood," and in an ancient *Treatise against Idleness, vaine Playes and Interludes*, by John Northbrook, bl. I. no date, but written apparently about the year 1580. Stubbes, in his *Anatomy of Abuses*, p. 90, edit. 1583, inveighs against *Theatres* and *Curtaines*, which he calls *Venus' Palaces*. Edmund Howes, the continuator of Stowe's *Chronicle*, says, (p. 1004,) that before the year 1570, he "neither knew, heard, nor read of any such theatres, set stages, or play-houses, as have been purposely built within man's memory."

⁴ This theatre had been originally a Cockpit. It was built or rebuilt not very long before the year 1617, in which year we learn from Camden's *Annals* of King James the first, it was pulled down by the mob: "1617. Martii 4. Theatrum ludionum nuper erectum in Drury-Lane à furente multitudine diruitur, et apparatus dilaceratur." I suppose it was sometimes called *The Phoenix* from that fabulous bird being its sign. It was situated opposite the Castle-tavern in Drury-Lane, and was standing some time after the Restoration. The players who performed at this theatre in the time of King James the first, were called the Queen's Servants, till the death of Queen Anne in 1619. After her death they were, I think, for some time denominated the Lady Elizabeth's servants; and after the marriage of King Charles the first, they regained their former title of the Queen's players.

⁵ See *Skialetheia*, an old collection of Epigrams, and Satires, 16mo. 1598:

"——— if my dispose

"Persuade me to a play, I'll to the Rose,

"Or *Curtain*,—"

The Curtain is mentioned in Heath's *Epigrams*, 1610, as being then open; and *The Hector of Germany* was performed at it by a company of young men in 1615. The original sign hung out at this playhouse (as Mr. Stevens has observed) was the painting of a curtain striped. The performers at this theatre were called *The Prince's Servants*, till the accession of King Charles the first to the crown. Soon after that period it seems to have been used only by prize-fighters.

Red Bull at the upper end of St. John's-street, and *The Fortune* in White-cross-street. The last two were chiefly

* The *Fortune* theatre, according to Maitland, was the oldest theatre in London. It was built or re-built in 1599 by Edward Alleyn, the player, (who was also proprietor of the *Bear-Garden* from 1594 to 1610,) and cost 520*l.* as appears from the following memorandum in his handwriting :

* What *The Fortune* cost me, Nov. 1599.

First for the lease to Brew - - - 240.

Then for building the play-hous, - - - 520.

For other privat buildings of myn owne, - - - 120.

So that it hath cost me for the lease, - - - £.880.

It was a round brick building, and its dimensions may be conjectured from the following advertisement in *The Mercurius Politicus*, Tuesday Feb. 14, to Tuesday Feb. 21, 1661, for the preservation of which we are indebted to Mr. Steevens: "The *Fortune* playhouse situate between Whitecross-street and Golding-lane, in the parish of Saint-Giles; Cripple-gate, with the ground thereto belonging, is to be lett to be built upon; where twenty-three tenements may be erected, with gardens; and a street may be cut through for the better accomodation of the buildings."

The Fortune is spoken of as a playhouse of considerable size, in the prologue to the *Roaring Girl*, a comedy which was acted there, and printed in 1611:

"A roaring girl, whose notes till now ne'er were,

"Shall fill with laughter our *cast theatre*."

See also the concluding lines of Shirley's prologue to *The Doubtful Hair*, quoted below.

Howes in his continuation of Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 1004, edit. 1631, says, it was burnt down in or about the year, 1617: "About foure yeares after, [i. e. after the burning of the Globe,] a fayre strong new-built play-houfe near Golden-lane, called the *Fortune*, by negligence of a candle was cleane burnt to the ground, but shortly after re-built far fairer." He is however, mistaken as to the time, for it was burnt down in December, 1621, as I learn from a letter in Dr. Birch's collection in the Museum, from Mr. John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, dated Dec. 15, 1621, in which is the following paragraph: "On Sunday night here was a great fire at *The Fortune* in Golden-lane, the first play-houfe in this town. It was quite burnt downe in two hours, and all their apparell and play-books lost, whereby those poore companions are quite undone. There were two other houses on fire, but with great labour and danger were saved." Mss. Birch, 4173. It does not appear whether this writer, by "the first play-houfe in this town," means the first in point of size or dignity, or the oldest. I doubt much its being the oldest, though that is the obvious meaning of the words, and though Maitland has asserted it: because I have not found it mentioned in any of the tracts relative to the stage, written in the middle of Elizabeth's reign.

Prynne says, that the *Fortune* on its re-building was enlarged. Epistle Dedicat. to *Hippioniasia*, 4to. 1633.

Before

frequented by citizens ⁷. There were, however, but six companies of comedians; for the playhouse in Blackfriars, and the Globe, belonged to the same troop. Beside these seven theatres, there were for some time on the Bankside three other publick theatres; *The Swan*, *The Rose* ⁸, and *The Hope* ⁹; but *The Hope* being used chiefly as a bear-garden, and *The Swan* and *The Rose* having fallen to decay early in King James's reign, they ought not to be enumerated with the other regular theatres.

All the established theatres that were open in 1598, were either without the city of London or its liberties ¹.

It appears from the office-book ² of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King James the First, and the two succeeding

Before this theatre there was either a picture or statue of Fortune. See *The English Traveller*, by Heywood, 1633.

"——— I'll rather stand here,

" Like a statue in the fore-front of your house

" For ever; like the picture of dame Fortune

" Before the Fortune play-house."

⁷ Wright's *Historia Histrionica*, 8vo. 1699, p. 5.

⁸ The *Swan* and the *Rose* are mentioned by Taylor the water-poet, but in 1613 they were shut up. See his *Works*, p. 171, edit. 1633. The latter had been built before 1598. See p. 36, n. 5. After the year 1620, as appears from Sir Henry Herbert's office-book, they were used occasionally for the exhibition of prize-fighters.

⁹ Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew-Fair* was performed at this theatre in 1614. He does not give a very favourable description of it:—"Though the fair be not kept in the same region that some here perhaps would have it, yet think that the author hath therein observed a special decorum, the place being as dirty as *Smithfield*, and as stinking every whit."—*Introduction to Bartholomew Fair*.

It appears from an old pamphlet entitled *Holland's Leaguer*, printed in quarto in 1632, that *The Hope* was occasionally used as a bear-garden, and that *The Swan* was then fallen into decay.

¹ Sunt porro Londini, *extra urbem*, theatra aliquot, in quibus histriones Angli comœdias et tragœdias singulis fere diebus, in magna hominum frequentia agunt; quas variis etiam saltationibus, suavissima adhibita musica, magno cum populi applausu finire solent." Hentzneri *Itinerarium*, 4to. 1598, p. 132.

² For the use of this very curious and valuable Manuscript I am indebted to Francis Ingram of Ribbissford near Bewdley in Worcestershire Esq. Deputy Remembrancer in the Court of Exchequer. It has lately been found in the same old chest which contained the manuscript Memoirs of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, from which Mr. Walpole about twenty years ago printed the Life of that nobleman, who was elder brother to Sir Henry Herbert.

The first Master of the Revels in the reign of queen Elizabeth was Thomas Bengier, whose patent passed the great seal Jan. 18, 1560-1. It is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera*. His successor, Edmund Tilney, obtained a grant

succeeding kings, that very soon after our poet's death, in the year 1622, there were but five principal companies of comedians

a grant of this office (the reversion of which John Lily, the dramattick poet, had long in vain solicited,) on the 24th of July, 1579, (as appears from a book of patents in the Pells-office,) and continued in possession of it during the remainder of her reign, and till October 1610, about which time he died. This office for near fifty years appears to have been considered as so desirable a place, that it was constantly sought for during the life of the possessor, and granted in reversion. King James on the 23d of June, 1603, made a reversionary grant of it to Sir George Buc, (then George Buc, Esq.) to take place whenever it should become vacant by the death, resignation, forfeiture, or surrender, of the then possessor Edmund Tilney; who, if I mistake not, was Sir George Buc's maternal uncle. Mr. Tilney, as I have already mentioned, did not die till the end of the year 1610, and should seem to have executed the duties of the office to the last; for his executor, as I learn from one of the *Exitus* books in the Exchequer, received in the year 1611, 120l. 18s. 3d. due to Mr. Tilney on the last day of the preceding October, for one year's expences of office. In the edition of Camden's *Britannia*, printed in folio in 1607, Sir George Buc is called Master of the Revels, I suppose from his having obtained the reversion of that place: for from what I have already stated he could not have been then in possession of it. April 3, 1612, Sir John Astley, one of the gentlemen of the privy-chamber, obtained a reversionary grant of this office, to take place on the death, &c. of Sir George Buc, as Ben Jonson the poet obtained a similar grant, October 5, 1621, to take place on the death, &c. of Sir John Astley and Sir George Buc.

Sir George Buc came into possession of the office about November, 1610, and held it till the end of the year 1621, when, in consequence of ill health, he resigned it to king James, and Sir John Astley succeeded him. How Sir Henry Herbert got possession of this office originally, I am unable to ascertain; but I imagine Sir John Astley for a valuable consideration appointed him his *deputy*, in August 1623, at which time, to use Sir Henry's own words, he "was received as Master of the Revels by his Majesty at Wilton;" and in the warrant-books of Philip earl of Pembroke, now in the Lord Chamberlain's office, containing warrants, orders, &c. between the years 1625 and 1642, he is constantly styled Master of the Revels. If Sir John Astley had formerly resigned or surrendered his office, Ben Jonson, in consequence of the grant obtained in the year 1621, must have succeeded to it; but he never derived any emolument from that grant, for Sir John Astley, as I find from the probate of his will, in the Prerogative office, (in which it is observable that he calls himself *Master of the Revels*, though both the duties and emoluments of the office were then exercised and enjoyed by another,) did not die till January 1639-40, above two years after the poet's death. To make his title still more secure, Sir Henry Herbert, in conjunction with Simon Thelwall, Esq. August 22, 1629, obtained a reversionary grant of this much sought-for office, to take place on the death, surrender, &c. of Sir John Astley and Benjamin Jonson. Sir Henry held the office for fifty years, though during the usurpation he could not exercise the functions nor enjoy the emoluments of it.

comedians in London; the King's Servants, who performed at the Globe and in Blackfriars; the Prince's Servants, who performed then at the Curtain; the Palsgrave's Servants³, who had possession of the Fortune; the players of the Revels, who acted at the Red Bull⁴; and the Lady Elizabeth's Servants, or, as they are sometimes denominated, the Queen of

Sir George Buc wrote an express treatise, as he has himself told us, on the stage and on revels, which is unfortunately lost. Previous to the exhibition of every play, it was licensed by the Master of the Revels, who had an established fee on the occasion. If ever therefore the Office-books of Mr. Tilney and Sir George Buc shall be found, they will ascertain precisely the chronological order of all the plays written by Shakspeare; and either confirm or overturn a system in forming which I have taken some pains. Having however found many of my conjectures confirmed by Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript, I have no reason to augur ill concerning the event, should the registers of his predecessors ever be discovered.

The regular salary of this office was but ten pounds a year; but, by fees and other perquisites, the emoluments Sir George Buc in the first year he came into possession of it, amounted to near 100l. The office afterwards became much more valuable.

Having mentioned this gentleman, I take this opportunity of correcting an error into which Anthony Wood has fallen, and which has been implicitly adopted in the new edition of *Biographia Britannica*, and many other books. The error I allude to, is, that this Sir George Buc, who was knighted at White-hall by king James the day before his coronation, July 23, 1603, was the author of the celebrated *History of King Richard the Third*; which was written above twenty years after his death by George Buck, Esq. who was, I suppose, his son. The precise time of the father's death, I have not been able to ascertain, there being no will of his in the prerogative-office; but I have reason to believe that it happened soon after the year 1622. He certainly died before August 1629.

The Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert contains an account of almost every piece exhibited at any of the theatres from August 1623 to the commencement of the rebellion in 1641, and many curious anecdotes relative to them, some of which I shall presently have occasion to quote. This valuable Manuscript having lain for a considerable time in a damp place, is unfortunately damaged, and in a very mouldering condition: however, no material part of it appears to have perished.

I cannot conclude this long note without acknowledging the obliging attention of W. E. Roberts, Esq. Deputy Clerk of the Pells, which facilitated every search I wished to make in his office, and enabled me to ascertain some of the facts above stated.

³ "1622. The Palsgrave's servants. Frank Grace, Charles Masly, Richard Price, Richard Fowler, — Kane, Curtys Grevill." Mr. Herbert. Three other names have perished. Of these one must have been that of Richard Gunnell, who was then the manager of the Fortune theatre; and another, that of William Cartwright, who was of the same company.

⁴ "The names of the chiefe players at the Red Bull, called the players of the Revells. Robert Lee, Richard Perkins, Ellis Woorth, Thomas Bassie, John Blany, John Cumber, William Robbins." *Ibidem*.

of Bohemia's players, who performed at the Cockpit in Drury-lane⁵.

When Prynne published his *Hystriomastix*, (1633) there were six play-houses open; the theatre in Blackfriars; the Globe; the Fortune; the Red Bull; the Cockpit or Phoenix, and a theatre in Salisbury-court, Whitefriars⁶.

All the plays of Shakspeare appear to have been performed either at *The Globe*, or the theatre in *Blackfriars*. I shall therefore confine my inquiries principally to those two. They belonged, as I have already observed, to the same company of comedians, namely his majesty's servants, which title they obtained after a licence had been granted to them by king James in 1603; having before that time, I apprehend, been called the servants of the Lord Chamberlain. Like the other servants of the household, the performers enrolled in this company were sworn into office, and each of them was allowed four yards of bastard scarlet for a cloak, and a quarter of a yard of velvet for the cape, every second year⁷.

The theatre in Blackfriars was situated near the present Apothecaries-hall, in the neighbourhood of which there is yet

⁵ "The chiefe of them at the Phoenix. Christopher Beeton, Joseph More, Eliard Swanston, Andrew Cane, Curtis Grevill, William Shurlock, Anthony Turner." *Ibidem*. Eliard Swanston in 1624 joined the company at Blackfriars.

That part of the leaf which contained the list of the king's servants, and the performers at the *Curtain*, is mouldered away.

⁶ It has been repeated again and again that Prynne enumerates *seventeen* play-houses in London in his time; but this is a mistake; he expressly says, that there were only six, (see his Epistle Dedicatory,) and the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert confirms his assertion.

Mr. Doddsley and others have fallen into this mistake of supposing there were *seventeen* play-houses open at one time in London; into which they were led by the continuator of Stowe, who mentions that between 1570 and 1630 seventeen play-houses were built, in which number however he includes five inns turned into play-houses, and St. Paul's singing-school. He does not say that they were all open at the same time.—A late writer carries the matter still further, and asserts that it appears from Rymier's *Miss.* in the Museum, that there were *twenty-three* play-houses at one time open in London!

⁷ "These are to signify unto your lordship his majesties pleasure, that you cause to be delivered unto his majesties players whose names follow, viz. John Hemmings, John Lowel, Joseph Taylor, Richard Robinson, John Shank, Robert Benfield, Richard Sharp, Eliard Swanston, Thomas Pollard, Anthony Smith, Thomas Hobbes, William Pen, George Vernon, and James Horne, to each of them the severall allowance of four yardes of bastarde skarlet for a cloake, and a quarter of a yard of crimson velvet for the capes, it being the usual allowance graunted unto them by his majesty every second yeare, and due at Easter last past. For the doing whereof theis shall be your warrant. May 6th, 1629." *Mss. in the Lord Chamberlain's Office.*

yet *Playhouse-yard*, not far from which the theatre probably stood. It was, as has been mentioned, a private house; but what were the distinguishing marks of a private playhouse, it is not easy to ascertain. We know only that it was smaller than those which were called publick theatres; and that in the private theatres plays were usually represented by candle-light⁶.

In this theatre, which was a very ancient one, the Children of the Revels occasionally performed⁷.

⁵ Wright, in his *Hist. Histron.* informs us, that the theatre in *Blackfriars*, the *Cockpit*, and that in *Salisbury-Court*, were exactly alike both in form and size. The smallness of the latter is ascertained by these lines in an epilogue to *Tottenham-Court*, a comedy by Nabbes, which was acted there:

"When others' fill'd rooms with neglect disdain ye,

"My little house with thanks shall entertain ye."

⁶ "All the city looked like a private play-house, when the windows are clapt downe, as if some nocturnal and dismal tragedy were presently to be acted." Decker's *Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, 1606. See also *Historia Histronica*.

⁷ Many pieces were performed by them in this theatre before 1580. Sometimes they performed entire pieces; at others, they represented such young characters as are found in many of our poet's plays. Thus we find Nat. Field, John Underwood, and William Ostler, among the children of the Revels who represented several of Ben Jonson's comedies at the Blackfriars in the earlier part of king James's reign, and also in the list of the actors of our author's plays prefixed to the first folio, published in 1623. They had then become men.

Lily's *Campaspe* was acted at the theatre in Blackfriars in 1584, and *The Cafe is altered*, by Ben Jonson, was printed in 1609, as acted by the children of Blackfriars. Some of the children of the Revels also acted occasionally at the theatre in Whitefriars; for we find *A Woman's a Weathercock*, performed by them at that theatre in 1612. Probably a certain number of these children were appropriated to each of these theatres, and instructed by the elder performers in their art; by which means this young troop became a promptuary of actors. In a manuscript in the Inner Temple, No. 515, Vol. VII. entitled, A booke conteyning several particulars with relation to the king's servants, petitions, warrants, bills, &c. and supposed to be a copy of some part of the Lord Chamberlain of the Household's book in or about the year 1622, I find "A warrant to the signet-office (dated July 8th, 1622,) for a privie scale for his majesties licence of Robert Lee, Richard Perkins, Ellis Woorth, Thomas Basse, John Blany, John Cumber, and William Robins, late comedians of Queene Anne deceased, to bring up children in the qualitie and exercise of playing comedies, histories, interludes, morales, pastorals, stage-plaies, and such like, as well for the sollace and pleasure of his majestie, as for the honest recreation of such as shall desire to see them; to be called by the name of *The Children of the Revels*; — and to be drawne in such a manner and forme as hath been used in other lycenss of that kinde." These very persons, we have seen, were the company of the Revels in 1622, and were then become men.

It is said in Camden's Annals of the reign of king James the first, that the theatre in Blackfriars fell down in the year 1623, and that above eighty persons were killed by the accident; but he was misinformed¹. The room which gave way was in a private house, and appropriated to the service of religion.

I am unable to ascertain at what time the Globe theatre was built. Hentzner has alluded to it as existing in 1598, though he does not expressly mention it². I believe it was not built long before the year 1596³. It was situated on the Bank-side, (the southern side of the river Thames,) nearly opposite to Friday-street, Cheapside. It was an hexagonal wooden building, partly open to the weather, and partly thatched⁴. When Hentzner wrote, all the other theatres as well as this were composed of wood.

The

* "1623. Ex occasu domus scenicæ apud Black-friers Londini, 81 personæ spectabiles necantur." Camdeni *Annaler*, ab anno 1603 ad annum 1623, 4t. 1691. p. 82. That this writer was misinformed, appears from an old tract, printed in the same year in which the accident happened, entitled, *A Word of Comfort, or a discourse concerning the late lamentable accident of the fall of a Room at a Catholick sermon in the Black-friers, London, whereby about four-score persons were oppressed*. 4to. 1623.

See also verses prefixed to a play called, *The Queen*, published by Alexander Goughe, (probably the son of Robert Goughe, one of the actors in Shakspeare's company,) in 1653:

" ————— we dare not say —

" — that Blackfriars we heare, which in this age

" Fell, when it was a church, *not when a stage*;

" Or that the puritans that once dwelt there,

" Prayed and thriv'd, though the play-house were so near."

Camden had a paralytick stroke on the 18th of August 1623, and died on the 9th of November following. The above-mentioned accident happened on the 24th of October; which accounts for his inaccuracy. The room which fell, was an upper room in Hunsdon-House, in which the French Ambassador then dwelt. See Stowe's Chron. p. 1035, edit. 1631.

⁹ "Non longe ab uno horum theatrorum, quæ omnia lignea sunt, ad Thamefin navis est regia, quæ duo egregia habet conclavia," &c. *Itin.* p. 132. By *navis regia*, he means the royal barge called the *Gallyfoist*. See the South View of London, as it appeared in 1599.

¹ See "The Suit of the Watermen against the Players," in the *Works* of Taylor the Water-poet, p. 171.

² In the long Antwerp View of London in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, is a representation of the Globe theatre, from which a drawing was made by the Rev. Mr. Henley, and transmitted to Mr. Steevens. From that drawing this cut was made.

The Globe was a publick theatre, and of considerable size³, and there they always acted by day-light⁴. On the roof of this and the other publick theatres a pole was erected, to which a flag was affixed⁵. These flags were probably displayed



³ The Globe, we learn from Wright's *Historia Histrionica*, was nearly of the same size as the *Fortune*, which has been already described.

⁴ *Historia Histrionica*, 8vo. 1699. p. 7.

⁵ So, in *The Curtain-Drawer of the World*, 1612: "Each play-house advanceth his *flagge* in the aire, whither quickly at the waving thereof are summoned whole troops of men, women, and children."—Again, in *A Mad World, my Masters*, a comedy by Middleton, 1608: "—the hair about the hat is as good as a *flag* upon the pole, at a common play-houfe, to waft company." See a *South View of the City of London* as it appeared in 1599, in which are representations of the *Globe* and *Swan* theatres.

played only during the hours of exhibition; and it should seem from one of the old comedies that they were taken down in Lent, in which time, during the early part of King James's reign plays were not allowed to be represented⁶, though at a subsequent period this prohibition was dispensed with⁷.

I formerly

theatres. From the words, "a common play-house," in the passage last quoted, we may be led to suppose that flags were not displayed on the roof of *Blackfriars*, and the other private play-houses.

This custom perhaps took its rise from a misconception of a line in Ovid:

"Tunc neque marmoreo pendebant vela theatro,—"

which Heywood, in a tract published in 1612, thus translates:

"In those days from the marble house did waive

"No sail, no *filken flag*, or ensign brave."

"From the roof (says the same author, describing a Roman amphitheatre,) grew a loover or turret, of exceeding altitude, from which an ensign of silk waved continually;—pendebant vela theatro."—The misinterpretation might, however, have arisen from the English custom.

⁶ "Tis Lent in your cheeks;—the flag is down." *A Mad World, my Masters*, a comedy by Middleton, 1608.

Again, in Earle's *Characters*, 7th edit. 1638: "Shrove-tuesday hee [a player] feares as much as the bawdes, and Lent is more dangerous to him than the butchers."

⁷ "[Received] of the King's players for a *lenten dispensation*, the other companys promising to doe as much, 44s. March 23, 1616."

"Of John Hemmingses, in the name of the four companys, for toleration in the holydayes, 44s. January 29, 1618."

Extracts from the office-book of Sir George Buc. Mss. Herbert.

These dispensations did not extend to the sermon-days, as they were then called; that is, Wednesday and Friday in each week.

After Sir Henry Herbert became possessed of the office of Master of the Revels, fees for permission to perform in Lent appear to have been constantly paid by each of the theatres. The managers however did not always perform plays during that season. Some of the theatres, particularly the Red-Bull and the Fortune, were then let to prize-fighters, tumblers, and rope-dancers, who sometimes added a Masque to the other exhibitions. These facts are ascertained by the following entries:

"1622, 21 Martii. For a prise at the Red-Bull, for the howse; the fencers would give nothing. 10s." Mss. Ashley.

"From Mr. Gunnel, [Manager of the Fortune,] in the name of the dancers of the ropes for Lent, this 15 March, 1624. £ 1. 0. 0."

"From Mr. Gunnel, to allowe of a *Masque* for the dancers of the ropes, this 19 March, 1624. £ 2. 0. 0."

We see here, by the way, that *Microcosmus*, which was exhibited in 1637, was not (as Dr. Burney supposes in his ingenious *History of Musick*, Vol. III. p. 385,) the first Masque exhibited on the publick stage.

"From Mr. Blagrove, in the name of the Cockpit company, for this Lent, this 30th March, 1624. £ 2. 0. 0."

"March 20, 1626. From Mr. Hemmingses, for this Lent allowanfe, £ 2. 0. 0." Mss. Herbert.

Prynne takes notice of this relaxation in his *Histrionastis*, 4to. 1633: "There are none so addicted to stage-playes, but when they go unto places where they cannot have them, or when as they are suppressed by publicke authority, (as in times of pestilence, and in Lent, till now of late,) can well subsist without them." p. 784.

I formerly conjectured that *The Globe*, though hexagonal at the outside, was perhaps a rotunda within, and that it might have derived its name from its circular form¹. But, though the part appropriated to the audience was probably circular, I now believe that the house was denominated only from its sign; which was a figure of Hercules supporting the Globe, under which was written, *Totus mundus agit histrionem*². This theatre was burnt down on the 29th of June, 1613³; but

¹ "After these" (says Heywood, speaking of the buildings at Rome, appropriated to scenick exhibitions,) "they composed others, but differing in form from the theatre or amphitheatre, and every such was called *circus*; the frame globe-like, and merely round." *Apology for Actors*, 1612. See also our author's prologue to *K. Henry V.*

"——— or may we cram

"Within this wooden O," &c.

But as we find in the prologue to Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*, which was acted by the *Children of Paul's* in 1602,

"If any spirit breathe within this round,—"

no inference respecting the denomination of *the Globe* can be drawn from this expression.

² Stowe informs us, that "the allowed Stewhouses [antecedent to the year 1545] had signes on their frontes towards the Thames, not hanged out, but painted on the walles; as a Boares head, The Crofs Keyes, The Gunne, The Castle, The Crane, The Cardinals Hat, the Bell, the Swanne," &c. *Survey of London*, 4to. 1603, p. 409. The houses which continued to carry on the same trade after the ancient and privileged edifices had been put down, probably were distinguished by the old signs; and the sign of the Globe, which theatre was in their neighbourhood, was perhaps, in imitation of them, painted on its wall.

³ The following account of this accident is given by Sir Henry Wotton, in a letter dated July 2, 1613, *Reliq. Wotton*, p. 425, edit. 1685: "Now to let matters of state sleep, I will entertain you at the present with what hath happened this week at the Banks side. The Kings Players had a new play called *All is true*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry the Eighth, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the knights of the order with their Georges and Garter, the guards with their embroidered coats, and the like: sufficient in truth within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now King Henry making a Masque at the Cardinal Wolseys house, and certain cannons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper or other stuff, wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where being thought at first but an idle smoak, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming within less than an hour the whole house to the very ground. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabrick, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks."

From a letter of Mr. John Chamberlaine's to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated July 8, 1613, in which this accident is likewise mentioned, we learn that this theatre had only two doors. "The burning of the Globe

but it was rebuilt in the following year, and decorated with more ornament than had been originally bestowed upon it⁴.

The exhibitions at *the Globe* seem to have been calculated chiefly for the lower class of people⁵; those at *Blackfriars*, for

or playhouse on the Bankside on St. Peter's day cannot escape you; which fell out by a peal of chambers, (that I know not upon what occasion were to be used in the play,) the tampion or stopple of one of them lighting in the thatch that covered the house, burn'd it down to the ground in less than two hours, with a dwelling-house adjoining; and it was a great marvaile and fair grace of God that the people had so little harm, having but two narrow doors to get out." Winwood's *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 469. Not a single life was lost.

In 1613 was entered on the Stationers' books *A doleful ballad of the general conflagration of the famous theatre on the Bankside, called the Globe*. I have never met with it.

⁴ See Taylor's *Skuller*, p. 31, Ep. 22.

"As gold is better that's in fier try'd,

"So is the Bank-side *Globe*, that late was burn'd;

"For where before it had a thatched hide,

"Now to a stately theator 'tis turn'd."

See also Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 1003.

⁵ *The Globe* theatre, being contiguous to the *Bear-Garden*, when the sports of the latter were over, the same spectators probably resorted to the former. The audiences at *the Bull* and *the Fortune* were, it may be presumed, of a class still inferior to that of *the Globe*. The latter, being the theatre of his majesty's servants, must necessarily have had a superior degree of reputation. At all of them, however, it appears, that noise and shew were what chiefly attracted an audience. Our author speaks in *Hamlet* of "herattling the common [i.e. the publick theatres.]" See also *A Prologue* spoken by a company of players who had seceded from *the Fortune*, p. 64, note 7; from which we learn that the performers at that theatre, "to split the ears of the groundlings, used "to tear a passion to tatters."

In some verses addressed by Thomas Carew to Mr. [afterwards Sir William] D'Avenant, "Upon his excellent Play, *The Just Italian*," 1630, I find a similar character of the *Bull* theatre:

"Now noise prevails; and he is tax'd for drowth

"Of wit, that with the cry spends not his mouth.—

"—thy strong fancies, raptures of the brain

"Dress'd in poetick flames, they entertain

"As a bold impious reach; for they'll still slight

"All that exceeds RED BULL and Cockpit flight.

"These are the men in crowded heaps that throng

"To that adulterate stage, where not a tongue

"Of the untun'd kennel can a line repeat

"Of serious sense; but like lips meet like meat:

"Whilst the true brood of actors, that alone

"Keep natural unstrain'd action in her throne,

"Behold their benches bare, though they rehearse

"The terser Beaumont's or great Jonson's verse."

The true brood of actors were the performers at *Blackfriars*, where *The Just Italian* was acted.

See

for a more select and judicious audience. This appears from the following prologue to Shirley's *Doubtful Heir*, which is inserted among his poems, printed in 1646, with this title:

" Prologue at *the GLOBE*, to his Comedy called *the Doubtful Heir*, which should have been presented at *the Blackfriars* ⁶.

" Gentlemen, I am only sent to say,
 " Our author did not calculate his play
 " For *this* meridian. The *Bankside*, he knows,
 " Is far more skilful at the ebbs and flows
 " Of water than of wit; he did not mean
 " For the elevation of your poles, this scene
 " No shews,—no dance,—and what you most delight in,
 " Grave understanders ⁷, here's no target-fighting
 " Upon the stage; all work for cutlers barr'd;
 " No bawdry, nor no ballads;—this goes hard:
 " But language clean, and, what affects you not,
 " Without impossibilities the plot;
 " No clown, no squibs, no devil in't.—Oh now,
 " You squirrels that want nuts, what will you do?
 " Pray do not crack the benches, and we may
 " Hereafter fit your palates with a play.
 " But you that can contract yourselves, and sit,
 " As you were now in the *Blackfriars* pit,
 " And will not deaf us with lewd noise and tongues,
 " Because we have no heart to break our lungs,
 " Will pardon our *vast* stage, and not disgrace
 " This play, meant for your persons, not the place."

The superior discernment of the *Blackfriars* audience may be likewise collected from a passage in the preface prefixed by Heminge and Condell to the first folio edition of our author's

See also *The Careless Shepherdes*, represented at Salisbury-court; 4to. 1656:

" And I will hasten to the money-box,
 " And take my *skilling* out again;—
 " I'll go to *THE BOLL*, or *FORTUNE*, and there see
 " A play for *two-pence*, and a jig to boot."

⁶ In the printed play these words are omitted; the want of which renders the prologue perfectly unintelligible. This comedy was performed for the first time at the Globe, June 1, 1640.

⁷ The common people stood in *the Globe* theatre, in that part of the house which we now call the pit; which being lower than the stage, Shirley calls them *understanders*. In the private playhouses, it appears from the subsequent lines, there were seats in the pit.

Ben Jonson has the same quibble: "—the *understanding* gentlemen of the ground here."

thor's works: "And though you be a *magistrate of wit*, and sit on the stage at *Blackfriars*, or the Cockpit, to arraign plays dailie, know these plays have had their tryal already, and stood out all appeales."

A writer already quoted⁸ informs us that one of these theatres was a winter, and the other a summer, house⁹. As the *Globe* was partly exposed to the weather, and they acted there usually by day-light, it appeared to me probable (when this Essay was originally published) that this was the summer theatre; and I have lately found my conjecture confirmed by Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript. The king's company usually began to play at the *Globe* in the month of May. The exhibitions here seem to have been more frequent than at *Blackfriars*, till the year 1604 or 1605, when the *Bankside* appears to have become less fashionable, and less frequented than it formerly had been².

Many of our ancient dramâtick pieces (as has been already observed) were performed in the yards of carriers' inns, in which, in the beginning of queen Elizabeth's reign, the comedians, who then first united themselves in companies, erected an occasional stage³. The form of these temporary play-

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houses

⁸ Wright.

⁹ His account is confirmed by a passage in an old pamphlet, entitled *Holland's Leaguer*, 4to. 1632: "She was most taken with the report of three famous amphitheaters, who stood so neere situated, that her eye might take view of them from her lowest turret. One was the *Continent of the World*, because half the yeere a world of beauties and brave spirits resorted unto it. The other was a building of excellent *Hope*; and though wild beasts and gladiators did most possesse it," &c.

¹ *King Lear*, in the title-page of the original edition, printed in 1608, is said to have been performed by his majesty's servants, playing usually at the *Globe* on the *Bankside*.—See also the licence granted by king James in 1603: "—and the said comedies, tragedies, &c.—to shew—as well within their now usual house called the *Globe*,—" No mention is made of their theatre in *Blackfriars*; from which circumstance I suspect that antecedent to that time our poet's company played only at the *Globe*, and purchased the *Blackfriars* theatre afterwards. In the licence granted by king Charles the First to John Heminge and his associates in the year 1625, they are authorized to exhibit plays, &c. "as well within these two their most usual houses called the *Globe* in the county of Surrey, and their private houses situate within the precinct of the *Blackfriars*—, as also," &c. Had they possessed the *Blackfriars* theatre in 1603, it would probably have been mentioned in the former licence. In the following year they certainly had possession of it, for Marston's *Malecontent* was acted there in 1604.

² See *The Works* of Taylor the Water-poet, p. 171, edit. 1633.

³ Fleckno, in his *Short Discourse of the English Stage*, published in 1664, says, some remains of these ancient theatres were at that day to be

houses seems to be preserved in our modern theatre. The galleries, in both, are ranged over each other on three sides of the building. The small rooms under the lowest of these galleries answer to our present boxes: and it is observable that these, even in theatres which were built in a subsequent period expressly for dramatick exhibitions, still retained their old name, and are frequently called *rooms*, by our ancient writers. The yard bears a sufficient resemblance to the pit, as at present in use. We may suppose the stage to have been raised in this area, on the fourth side, with its back to the gateway of the inn, at which the money for admission was taken. Thus, in fine weather, a playhouse not incommodious might have been formed.

Hence, in the middle of *the Globe*, and I suppose of the other *publick* theatres, in the time of Shakspeare, there was an open yard or area^s, where the common people stood to see the exhibition; from which circumstance they are called by our author *groundlings*, and by Ben Jonson "the *understanding gentlemen of the ground*."

The galleries, or *scaffolds*, as they are sometimes called, and that part of the house which in private theatres was named

be seen in the inn-yards of the *Cross-keys* in Gracechurch-street, and the *Bull* in Bishopsgate-street.

In the seventeen playhouses erected between the years 1570 and 1630, the continuator of Stowe's *Chronicle* reckons "five *innes* or common *ofseries* turned into play-houses."

⁴ See a prologue to, *If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in it*, quoted in p. 52, n. 1. These rooms appear to have been sometimes employed, in the infancy of the stage, for the purposes of gallantry. "These plays," (says Strype in his additions to Stowe's *Survey*) "being commonly acted on sundays and festivals, the churches were forsaken, and the play-houses thronged. Great inns were used for this purpose, which had secret chambers and places as well as open stages and galleries. Here maids and good citizens' children were inveigled and allured to private unmeet contracts." He is speaking of the year 1574.

⁵ "In the play-houses in London, it is the fashion of youthes to go first into the *yards*, and to carry their eye through every gallery; then like unto ravens, when they spy the carion, thither they flye, and press as near to the fairest as they can." *Plays Confuted in Five several Actions*, by Stephen Gosson, 1580. Again, in Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609: "The stage, like time, will bring you to most perfect light, and lay you open; neither are you to be hunted from thence, though the *scar-crowes* in the *yard* hoot at you, hiss at you, spit at you." So, in the prologue to an old comedy called *The Hog has his Pearl*, 1614:

"We may be pelted off for what we know,

"With apples, eggs, or stones, from *those below*."

See also the prologue to *The Doubtful Heir*, ante, p. 48:

"—and what you most delight in,

"Grave *understanders*,——"

named the pit⁶, seem to have been at the same price; and probably in houses of reputation, such as *the Globe*, and that in *Blackfriars*, the price of admission into those parts of the theatre was six-pence⁷, while in some meaner playhouses it was only a penny⁸, in two others two-pence⁹. The price of

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admission

⁶ The pit, Dr. Percy supposes to have received its name from one of the playhouses having been formerly a *cock-pit*. This account of the term, however, seems to be somewhat questionable. The place where the seats are ranged at St. Mary's at Cambridge, is still called the *pit*; and no one can suspect that venerable fabrick of having ever been a *cock-pit*, or that the phrase was borrowed from a play-house to be applied to a church. A *pit* is a place low in its relative situation, and such is the middle part of a theatre.

Shakspeare himself uses *cock-pit* to express a small confined situation, without any particular reference:

"—— Can this *cock-pit* hold

"The vasty fields of France,—or may we cram,

"Within this wooden O, the very casques

"That did affright the air at Agincourt?"

⁷ See an old collection of tales, entitled *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*, 4to. 1595: "When the great man had read the actors letter, he presently, in answer to it, took a sheet of paper, and folding *sixpence* up in it, sealed it, subscribed it, and sent it to his brother; intimating thereby, that though his brother had vowed not in seven years to see him, yet he for his *sixpence* could come and see him upon the stage at his pleasure."

So, in the induction to *The Magnetick Lady*, by Ben Jonson, which was first represented in October, 1632: "Not the *faces* or grounds of your people, that sit in the oblique caves and wedges of your house, your sinful *sixpenny mechanics*."

See below, Verses addressed to Fletcher on his *Faithful Shepherds*.

That there were *sixpenny* places at the *Blackfriars* playhouse, appears from the epilogue to Mayne's *City Match*, which was acted at that theatre in 1637, being licensed on the 17th of November, in that year:

"Not that he fears his name can suffer wrack

"From them, who *sixpence* pay, and *sixpence* crack;

"To such he wrote not, though some parts have been

"So like here, that they to themselves came in."

⁸ So, in *Wit without Money*, by Fletcher:—"break in at plays like prentices for three a groat, and crack nuts with the scholars in *penny* rooms again."

Again, in Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609: "Your *grouddling* and *gallery* commoner buys his sport by the *penny*."

Again, in *Humours Ordinarie*, *robbers a Man may be very merrie and exceeding well used for his Sixpence*, no date:

"Will you stand spending your invention's treasure

"To teach stage-parrots speak for *penny* pleasure?"

⁹ "Pay thy *two-pence* to a player, in this gallery you may sit by a harlot." *Bell-mans Night-walk* by Decker, 1616.

Again, in the prologue to the *Woman-hater*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, 1607: "—to the utter discomfiture of all *two-penny gallery* men."

It

admission into the best *rooms* or boxes¹, was, I believe, in our author's time, a shilling; though afterwards it appears to have

It appears from a passage in *The Roaring Girl*, a comedy by Middleton and Decker, 1611, that there was a *two-penny* gallery in the *Fortune* playhouse: "One of them is Nip; I took him once at the *two-penny* gallery at the *Fortune*." See also above, p. 47, n. 5.

¹ The boxes in the theatre at *Blackfriars* were probably small, and appear to have been *enclosed* in the same manner as at present. See a letter from Mr. Garrard, dated January 25, 1635, *Straff. Letters*, Vol. I. p. 511: "A little pique happened betwixt the duke of Lenox and the lord chamberlain, about a *box* at a new play in the *Blackfriars*, of which the duke had got the key; which if it had come to be debated betwixt them, as it was once intended, some heat or perhaps other inconvenience might have happened."

In the *Globe* and the other publick theatres, the boxes were of considerable size. See the prologue to *If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in it*, by Decker, acted at the *Red Bull*:

" ——— Give me that man,
" Who, when the plague of an imposthum'd brains,
" Breaking out, infects a theatre, and hotly reigns,
" Killing the hearers' hearts, that the *vast rooms*
" Stand empty, like so many dead men's tombs,
" Can call the banish'd auditor home," &c.

He seems to be here describing his antagonist B. Jonson, whose plays were generally performed to a thin audience. See *Verses* on our author, by Leonard Digges, Vol. I. p. 178.

² "If he have but *twelvepence* in his purse, he will give it for the *best room* in a playhouse." Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*, 1614.

So, in the prologue to our author's *King Henry VIII*:

" ——— Those that come to see
" Only a shew or two, and so agree
" The play may pass, if they be still and willing,
" I'll undertake may see away their *shilling*
" In two short hours."

Again in a copy of verses prefixed to Massinger's *Bondman*, 1624:

" Reader, If you have disburs'd a *shilling*
" To see this worthy story,—"

Again in the *Gulls Hornebooke*, 1609: "At a new play you take up the *twelvepenny room* next the stage, because the lords and you may seem to be hail fellow well met."

So late as in the year 1658, we find the following advertisement at the end of a piece called *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*, by Sir William D'Avenant: "Notwithstanding the great expence necessary to *scenes* and other ornaments, in this entertainment, there is good provision made of places for a *shilling*, and it shall certainly begin at three in the afternoon."

In the *Scornful Lady*, which was acted by the children of the Revels at *Blackfriars*, and printed in 1616, *one-and-sixpenny* places are mentioned. —

See

have risen to two shillings³, and half a crown⁴. At the Blackfriars theatre the price of the boxes was, I imagine, higher than at the Globe.

From several passages in our old plays we learn, that spectators were admitted on the stage⁵, and that the criticks and wits of the time usually sat there⁶. Some were placed on the ground⁷; others sat on stools, of which the price was either

³ See the prologue to *The Queen of Arragon*, a tragedy by Habington, acted at Blackfriars in May, 1640:

"Ere we begin, that no man may repent"

"Two shillings and his time, the author sent"

"The prologue, with the errors of his play,

"That who will may take his money, and a way."

Again, in the epilogue to Mayne's *City Match*, acted at *Blackfriars*, in November, 1637:

"To them who call't reproof, to make a face,

"Who think they judge, when they frown i' the wrong place,

"Who, if they speak not ill o' the poet, doubt

"They loose by the play, nor have their two shillings out,

"He says," &c.

⁴ See *Wit without Money*, a comedy, acted at *The Swan* in Drury-lane before 1620:

"And who extoll'd you into the half-crown boxes,

"Where you might sit and muster all the beauties."

In the play-house called *the Hope* on the Bankside, there were five different-priced seats, from sixpence to half a crown. See the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, by Ben Jonson, 1614.

⁵ So, in *A Mad World by Masters*, by Middleton, 1608: "The actors have been found in a morning in less compass than their stage, though it were ne'er so full of gentlemen." See also p. 55. n. 3.

⁶ "—to fair attire the stage

"Helps much; for if our other audience see

"You on the stage depart, before we end,

"Our wits go with you all, and we are fools."

Prologue to *All Fools*, a comedy, acted at *Blackfriars*, 1605.

"By sitting on the stage, you have a sign'd patent to engrosse the whole commoditie of *censure*; may lawfully presume to be a girder, and stand at the helm to steer the passage of scenes." *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609.

See also the preface to the first folio edition of our author's works:—"And though you be a magistrate of wit, and sit on the stage at Blackfriars, to arraigne plays dailie,—"

⁷ "Being on your feet, sneake not away like a coward, but salute all your gentle acquaintance that are spread either on tee rushes or on stooles about you; and draw what troope you can from the stage after you." Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609. So also, in Fletcher's *Queen of Corinth*:

"I would not yet be pointed at as he is,

"For the fine courtier, the woman's man,

"That tells my lady stories, dissolves riddles,

"Ushers her to her coach, lies at her feet

"At solemn masques."

From

either sixpence^s, or a shilling^s, according, I suppose, to the commodiousness of the situation. And they were attended by pages, who furnished them with pipes and tobacco, which was smoked here as well as in other parts of the house^l. Yet it should seem that persons were suffered to sit on the stage only in the private playhouses, (such as *Black Friars*, &c.) where

From a passage in *King Henry IV. P. I.* it may be presumed that this was no uncommon practice in private assemblies also:

"She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down,

"And rest your gentle head upon her lap,

"And she will sing the song that pleaseth you."

This accounts for Hamlet's sitting on the ground at Ophelia's feet, during the representation of the play before the king and court of Denmark. Our author has only placed the young prince in the same situation in which probably his patrons Essex and Southampton were often seen at the feet of some celebrated beauty. What some chose from economy, gallantry might have recommended to others.

"By sitting on the stage, you may with small cost purchase the deere acquaintance of the boyes, have a good stool for sixpence,—"*Guls Hornebooke*.

Again, *ibidem*: "Present not your selfe on the stage, (especially at a new play,) untill the quaking prologue—is ready to enter; for then it is time, as though you were one of the properties, or that you dropt of [i. e. off] the hangings, to creep from behind the arras, with your tripos, or three-legged stools, in one hand, and a treston mounted between a fore-finger and a thumbe, in the other."

"These are most worne and most in fashion

"Amongst the bever gallants, the stone-riders,

"The private stage's audience, the twelvepenny-stool gentlemen."

The Roaring Girl, a comedy by Middleton and Decker, 1611.

So in the Induction to Marston's *Malcontent*, 1604: "By God's flid if you had, I would have given you but sixpence for your stool." This therefore was the lowest rate; and the price of the most commodious stools on the stage was a shilling.

"When young *Rogero* goes to see a play,

"His pleasure is, you place him on the stage,

"The better to demonstrate his array,

"And how he sits attended by his page,

"That only serves to fill those pipes with smoke,

"For which he pawned hath his riding-cloak."

Springs for Woodcocks, by Henry Parrot, 1613.

Again, *Siliathea*, a collection of Epigrams and Satires, 1598:

"See you him yonder who sits o'er the stage,

"With the tobacco-pipe now at his mouth?"

This however, was accounted "a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance;" as appears from a satirical epigram by Sir John Davies, 1598:

"Who dares affirm that Sylla dares not fight?

"He that dares take tobacco on the stage;

"Dares man a whoore at noon-day through the street;

"Dares dance in Pauls;" &c.

where the audience was more select, and of a higher class: and that in *the Globe* and the other publick theatres, no such licence was permitted².

The stage was strewed with rushes³, which, we learn from Hentzner and Caius de Ephemera, was in the time of Shakspeare the usual covering of floors in England⁴. On some occasions it was entirely matted over⁵; but this was probably very rare. The curtain which hangs in the front of the present stage, drawn up by lines and pulleys, though not a modern invention, (for it was used by Inigo Jones in the masques at court,) was yet an apparatus to which the simple mechanism of our ancient theatres had not arrived; for in them the curtains opened in the middle, and were drawn backwards and forwards on an iron rod⁶. In some playhouses they were woollen, in others, made of silk⁷. Towards the rear

² See the induction to Marston's *Malecontent* 1604, which was acted by his majesty's servants at *Blackfriars*:

"Tyreman. Sir, the gentlemen will be angry if you sit here.

Sly. Why, we may sit upon the stage at the *private* house. Thou dost not take me for a country gentleman, dost? Dost thou think I fear hissing? Let them that have stale suits, sit in the galleries, hiss at me—"

See also *The Roaring Girl*, by Middleton: "*—the private stage's audience,—*" Ante, p. 54, n. 9.

³ "On the very *rushes* where the comedy is to daunce, yea, and under the state of Cambyse himselfe, must our feathered estridge, like a piece of ordnance, be planted valiantly, because impudently, beating down the mews and hisses of the opposed rascality." Decker's *Gull Hornetbooke*.

⁴ See also Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, 1600: "Fore G—, sweet lady, believe it, I do honour the meanest *rush* in this chamber for your love."

⁵ See p. 46. n. 3.

⁶ The epilogue to *Tancred and Gismund*, a tragedy, 1592, concludes thus.

"Now draw the curtaines, for our scene is done."

Again in *Lady Alimony*, 1659: "Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded, that the squint-eyed groundling may not peep in."

See also a stage-direction in *The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House*, by Declamation and Musick, after the manner of the Ancients, by Sir William D'Avenant, 1658:

"The song ended, the curtains are drawn open again, and the epilogue enters.

⁷ See *A prologue upon removing of the late Fortune Players to the Bull*, by J. Tatham; *Fancies Theatre*, 1640:

"Here gentlemen our anchor's fixt; and we,

"Disdaining Fortune's mutability,

"Expect your kind acceptance; then we'll sing,

"(Protected by your smiles, our ever-Spring,)

"As

rear of the stage there appears to have been a balcony⁸, or upper stage; the platform of which was probably eight or nine feet from the ground. I suppose it to have been supported by pillars. From hence, in many of our old plays, part of the dialogue was spoken; and in the front of it curtains likewise were hung⁹, so as occasionally to conceal the persons in it from the view of the audience. At each side of this balcony was a box, very inconveniently situated, which sometimes was called the *private box*. In these boxes, which were at a lower price, some persons sat, either from economy or singularity¹.

How

"As pleasant as if we had still possess
 "Our lawful portion out of *Fortune's* breast.
 "Only we would request you to forbear
 "Your wonted custom, banding tile and pear
 "Against our *curtains*, to allure us forth;—
 "I pray, take notice, these are of more worth;
 "Pure *Naples silk*, not *worsted*.—We have ne'er
 "An actor here has mouth enough to tear
 "Language by the ears. This forlorn hope shall be
 "By us refin'd from such gross injury:
 "And then let your judicious loves advance
 "Us to our merits, them to their ignorance."

⁸ See Nabbes's *Copent Garden*, a comedy, 1639:

"Enter Dorothy and Susan, in the balcony."

So, in *The Virgin Martyr*, by Massinger and Decker, 1622:

"They whispering below, Enter, above, Sapritius;—With him Artemia the princess, Theophilus, Spungius, and Hercius." And these five personages speak from this elevated situation during the whole scene.

Again, in Marston's *Fawne*, 1606:

"Whilst the act [i. e. the musick between one act and another] is a playing, Hercules and Tiberio enters; Tiberio climbs the tree, and is received above by Dulcimet, Philocalia and a priest: Hercules stays beneath."

See also the early quarto edition of our author's *Romeo and Juliet*, where we meet—"Enter *Romeo and Juliet*, aloft." So, in *The Taming of a Shrew* (not Shakspeare's play): "Enter aloft the drunkard."—Almost the whole of the dialogue in that play between the tinker and his attendants, appears to have been spoken in this balcony.

In Middleton's *Family of Love* 1608, signat. B 2. b. it is called the upper stage.

⁹ This appears from a stage-direction in Massinger's *Emperor of the East*, 1632: "The *curtain* drawn above: Theodosius and his eunuchs discovered." Again in *King Henry VIII.*

"Let them alone, and draw the curtain close."

Henry here speaks from the balcony.

¹ "Whether therefore the gatherers of the publique or private play-house stand to receive the afternoons rent, let our gallant, having paid it,

How little the imaginations of the audience were assisted by scenical deception, and how much necessity our author had to call on them to "piece out imperfections with their thoughts," may be collected from Sir Philip Sidney, who, describing the state of the drama and the stage, in his time, (about the year 1583,) says, "Now you shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must beleve the stage to be a garden. By and by we heare news of shipwrack in the same place; then we are to blame, if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that, comes out a hidious monster with fire and smoke; and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while in the mean time two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field²."

The first notice that I have found of any thing like moveable scenes being used in England, is in the narrative of the entertainment given to king James at Oxford in August 1605, when three plays were performed in the hall of Christ Church, of which we have the following account by a contemporary writer. "The stage," (he tells us) "was built close to the upper end of the hall, as it seemed at the first sight: but

it, presently advance himself to the throne of the stage. I mean not into the lords' roome, which is now but the stages suburbs. No, those boxes,—by the iniquity of custom, conspiracy of waiting-women, and gentlemen-ushers, that there sweat together, and the covetous sharers,—are contemptibly thrust into the *reare*, and much new fatten is there damnd, by being smother'd to death in darkness." Decker's *Guls Hornebooke* 1609. So, in the prologue to an old comedy, of which I have lost the title:

"The private box took up at a new play,

"For me and my retinue; a fresh habit

"Of a fashion never seen before, to draw

"The gallants' eyes, that sit upon the stage."

See also *Epigrams* by Sir John Davies, no date, but printed at Middleburgh, about 1598:

"*Rufus*, the courtier, at the theatre,

"Leaving the best and most conspicuous place,

"Doth either to the stage himself transfer,

"Or through a grate doth shew his double face,

"For that the clamorous fry of innes of court,

"Fills up the private roomes of greater price;

"And such a place where all may have resort,

"He in his singularity doth despise."

It is not very easy to ascertain the precise situation of these private boxes. A print prefixed to Kirkman's *Drolls*, 1673, induces me to think that they were at each side of the stage balcony.

² *Defence of Poesie*, 1595. Signat. H. 4.

indeed it was but a false wall faire painted, and adorned with stately pillars, which pillars would turn about; by reason whereof, with the help of other *painted clothes*, their stage did vary three times in the acting of one tragedy: that is, in other words, there were three scenes employed in the exhibition of the piece. The scenery was contrived by Inigo Jones, who is described as a *great traveller*, and who undertook to "further his employers much, and furnish them with rare devices, but produced very little to that which was expected³."

It is observable that the writer of this account was not acquainted even with the term *scene*, having used *painted clothes* instead of it: nor indeed is this surprising, it not being then found in this sense in any dictionary or vocabulary, English or foreign, that I have met with. Had the common stages been furnished with them, neither this writer, nor the makers of dictionaries, could have been ignorant of it⁴. To effect even

³ Leland. *Collec.* Vol. II. pp. 631, 646. Edit. 1770. See also p. 639: "The same day, August 28, after supper, about nine of the clock they began to act the tragedy of *Ajax Flagellifer*, wherein the stage varied three times. They had all goodly antique apparell, but for all that, it was not acted so well by many degrees as I have seen it in Cambridge. The king was very wearie before he came thither, but much more wearied by it, and spoke many words of dislike."

⁴ Florio, who appears to have diligently studied our customs, illustrating his explanations on many occasions by English proverbs, sayings, local descriptions, &c. in his *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, defines *Scena*, in these words: "A scene of a comedie, or tragedie. Also a stage in a theatre, or playhouse, whereon they play; a scaffold, a pavillion, or fore part of a theatre, where players make them readie, being trimmed with hangings, out of which they enter upon the stage. Used also for a comedie or a tragedie. Also a place where one doth shew and set forth himselfe to the world." In his second edition, published in 1611, instead of the words, "A scene of a comedie or tragedie" we find—"Any one scene or entrance of a comedie or tragedie," which more precisely ascertains his meaning.

In Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary* printed in 1611, the word *scene* is not found, and if it had existed either in France or England, (in the sense in which we are now considering it,) it would probably have been found. From the word *salot*, the definition of which I shall have occasion to quote hereafter, the writer seems to have been not unacquainted with the English stage.

Bullokar, who was a physician, published an *English Expositor* in the year in which Shakspeare died. From his definition likewise it appears, that a moveable painted scene was then unknown in our theatres. He defines *Scena*, "A play, a comedy, a tragedy, or the division of a play into certain parts. In old time it signified a place covered with boughes, or the room where the players made them readie." Minshew's

large

even what was done at Christ-Church, the University found it necessary to employ two of the king's carpenters, and to have the advice of the controller of his works. The Queen's Masque, which was exhibited in the preceding January, was not much more successful, though above £.3000 was expended upon it. "At night," says Sir Dudley Carleton, "we had the Queen's Maske in the Banqueting-house, or rather her Pageant. There was a great engine at the lower end of the room, which had motion, and in it were the images of sea-horses, (with other terrible fishes,) which were ridden by the Moors. The indecorum was, that there was all fish, and no water. At the further end was a great shell in form of a skallop, wherein were four seats; on the lowest sat the queen with my lady Bedford, on the rest were placed the ladies Suffolk, Darby⁵," &c. Such were most of the Masques in

large English Dictionary, which he calls *A Guide to the Tongues*, was published in the following year, 1617, and there *Scene* is nothing more than "*a theatre*." Nay, even so late as in the year 1656, when Cockeram's English Dictionary, or *Interpreter of hard English words* was published, *Scene* is only said to be "the division of a play into certain parts."

Had our English theatres in the time of Shakspeare been furnished with moveable scenes, painted in perspective, can it be supposed that all these writers should have been ignorant of it?

It is observable that Coryate in his *Cruces*, 4to, 1611, when he is boasting of the superior splendour of the English theatres, compared with those of Venice, makes no mention of *scenes*. "I was at one of their playhouses, where I saw a comedie. The house is very beggarly and base in comparison of our stately playhouses in England: neither can their actors compare with us, for *apparel, flowers, and musicke*." *Cruces*, p. 247.

It is also worthy of remark that Mr. Chamberlaine, when he is speaking of the fate of the performers at the Fortune theatre, when it was burnt down in 1621, laments that "their *apparel* and *play-books* were lost, whereby those poor companions were quite undone;" but says not a word of *scenes*. See also Sir Henry Wotton's letter on the burning of the *Globe* in 1613, p. 46, n. 3.

⁵ Letter from Sir Dudley Carleton to Mr. Winwood, London, Jan. 1604, [i. e. 1604-5.] Winwood's *Memorials*, II. 43. This letter contains so curious a trait of our British Solomon, that I cannot forbear transcribing another passage from it, though foreign to our present subject. "On Saint John's day we had the marriage of Sir Philip Herbert and the Lady Susan performed at Whitehall, with all the honour could be done a great favourite. The Court was great, and for that day put on the best bravery.—At night there was a Mask in the hall, which for conceit and fashion was suitable to the occasion. The presents of plate and other things given by the noblemen [to the bride and bridegroom] were valued at 2500l.; but that which made it a good marriage, was a gift of the king's of 500l. land, for the bride's jointure.

in the time of James the First : triumphal cars, castles, rocks, caves, pillars, temples, clouds, rivers, tritons, &c. composed the principal part of their decoration. In the courtly masques given by his successor during the first fifteen years of his reign, and in some of the plays exhibited at court, the art of scenery seems to have been somewhat improved. In 1636 a piece written by Thomas Heywood, called *Love's Mistress or the Queen's Masque*, was represented at Denmark House before their Majesties. "For the rare decorements" (says Heywood in his preface) "which new appalled it, when it came the second time to the royal view, (her gracious majesty then entertaining his highness at *Denmark House* upon his birth-day,) I cannot pretermitt to give a due character to that admirable artist Mr. Inigo Jones, master surveyor of the king's worke, &c. who to every act, nay almost to every scene, by his excellent inventions gave such an extraordinary lustre ; upon every occasion *changing the stage*, to the admiration of all the spectators." Here, as on a former occasion, we may remark, the term *scene* is not used : the *stage was changed* to the admiration of all the spectators^o.

In August 1636, *The Royal Slave*, written by a very popular poet, William Cartwright, was acted at Oxford before the king and queen, and afterwards at Hampton-Court. Wood informs us *, that the scenery was an exquisite and uncommon piece of machinery, contrived by Inigo Jones.

The

ture. They were lodged in the council chamber, where the king in his *shirt and night-gown* gave them a *réveille-matin* before they were up, and spent a good time *in or upon the bed*, choose which you will believe. No ceremony was omitted of bride-cakes, points, garters, and gloves, which have been ever since the livery of the court ; and at night there was sewing into the sheet, casting of the bride's left hose, with many other petty sorceries."

Our poet has been censured for indelicacy of language, particularly in Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia, during the representation of the play before the Court of Denmark ; but unjustly, for he undoubtedly represented the manners and conversation of his own day faithfully. What the decorum of those times was, even in the highest class, may be conjectured from another passage in the same letter : "The night's work [the night of the queen's masque] was concluded with a banquet in the great chamber, which was so furiously assaulted, that down went table and tressles, before one bit was touched."—Such was the court of King James the First.

^o If in our author's time the publick stage been *changed*, or, in other words, had the Globe and Blackfriars playhouse been furnished with *scenæ*, would they have created so much admiration at a royal entertainment in 1636, twenty years after his death ?

* *Hist. et Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* l. i. p. 344.

The play was printed in 1639; and yet even at that late period, the term *scene*, in the sense now affixed to it, was unknown to the author; for describing the various scenes employed in this court-exhibition, he denominates them thus: "The first *Appearance*, a temple of the sun.—Second *Appearance*, a city in the front, and a prison at the side," &c. The three other *Appearances* in this play were, a wood, a palace, and a castle.

In every disquisition of this kind much trouble and many words might be saved, by defining the subject of dispute. Before therefore I proceed further in this inquiry, I think it proper to say, that by a *scene*, I mean, *A painting in perspective on a cloth fastened to a wooden frame or roller*; and that I do not mean by this term, "a coffin, or a tomb, or a gilt chair, or a fair chain of pearl, or a crucifix:" and I am the rather induced to make this declaration, because a writer, who obliquely alluded to the position which I am now maintaining, soon after the first edition of this Essay was published, has mentioned exhibitions of this kind as a proof of the *scenery* of our old plays: and taking it for granted that the point is completely established by this *decisive* argument, triumphantly adds, "Let us for the future no more be told of the want of proper *scenes* and dresses in our ancient theatres?"

A passage

7 "My present purpose," says this writer, "is not so much to describe this dramattick piece, [*The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, written in 1610, or 1611,] as to shew that it bears abundant testimony to the use of *scenery*, and the richness of the habits then worn. These particulars will be sufficiently exemplified by the following speeches, and stage-directions:

"Enter the Tyrant agen at a farder door, which opened brings him to the tomb, where the lady lies buried. The Toombe here discovered, richly set forth."

Some lines are then quoted from the same piece, of which the following are those which alone are material to the present point:

"Tyrant.—Softlee, softlee;—

"The vaults e'en chide our steps with murmuring sounds.

"All thy still strength,

"Thow grey-cyde monument, shall not keep her from us.

"Strike, villaines, thoe the eccho raile us all

"Into ridiculous deafnes; pierce the jawes

"Of this could ponderous creature.—

"O, the moone rises: What reflection

"Is throwne around this sanctified buildinge!

"E'en in a twinkling how the monuments glitter,

"As if Death's pallaces were all massie sylver,

"And scorn'd the name of marble!"

"Is

A passage which has been produced from one of the old comedies⁸, proves that the common theatres were furnished with some rude pieces of *machinery*, which were used when it was necessary to exhibit the descent of some god or saint; but it is manifest from what has been already stated, as well as from all the contemporary accounts, that the mechanism of our ancient theatres seldom went beyond a tomb, a painted chair, a sinking cauldron, or a trap-door, and that none of them had moveable scenes. When king Henry VIII. is to be discovered by the dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk, reading in his study, the scenical direction in the first folio, 1623, (which was printed apparently from playhouse copies,) is "*The king draws the curtain, [i. e. draws it open] and sits reading pensively;*" for, beside the principal curtains that hung in the front of the stage, they used others as substitutes for scenes⁹, which were denominated *traverses*. If a bed-chamber

is

"Is it probable," (adds this writer) "that such directions and speeches should have been hazarded, unless at the same time they could be supported and countenanced by corresponding scenery?"

"I shall add two more of the stage-directions from this tragedy.—"On a sodayne in a kinde of noyse like a wynde, the dores clattering, the toombestone flies open, and a great light appears in the midst of the toombe; his lady, as went owt, standing in it before hym all in white, stuck with jewells, and a great crucifix on her breast." Again: "They bring the body in a chayre, drest up in black velvet, which settis off the pailnes of the hands and face, and a faire chayne of pearle cross the breast, and the crucifix above it," &c.

"Let us for the future, Mr Baldwin, be told with less confidence of the want of proper *scenes* and dresses in our ancient theatres."—Letter in *The St. James's Chronicle*, May, 1780.

To all this I have only to say, that it never has been asserted, at least by me, that in Shakspeare's time a *tomb* was not represented on the stage. The monument of the Capulets was perhaps represented in *Romeo and Juliet*, and a wooden structure might have been used for this purpose in that and other plays; of which when the door was once opened, and a quantity of lamps, false stones, and black cloth displayed, the poet might be as luxuriant as he pleased in describing the surrounding invisible *marble monuments*. This writer, it should seem, was thinking of the epigram on Butler the poet: we ask for *scenes*, and he gives us only a *stone*.

⁸ "Of whyche the lyke thyng is used to be shewed *nowe adays* in *stage-plays*, when some god or some *saynt* is made to appere forth of a cloude; and succoureth the parties which seemed to be towards some great danger, through the Soudan's crueltie." The author's marginal abridgement of his text is—"The lyke manner used nowe at our days in *stage-plays*." *Accolastus*, a comedy by T. Palsgrave, chaplain to king Henry VIII. 1540.

⁹ See Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, acted at the Globe and Blackfriars, and printed in 1623: "Here is discovered behind a *traverse* the artificial figures."

is to be represented, no change of scene is mentioned; but the property-man is simply ordered *to thrust forth a bed*, or, the curtains being opened, a bed is exhibited. So, in the old play on which Shakspeare formed his *King Henry VI. P. II.* when Cardinal Beaufort is exhibited dying, the stage-direction is — “Enter King and Salisbury, and then *the curtains be drawn*, [i. e. drawn open,] and the Cardinal is discovered in his bed, raving and staring as if he were mad.” When the fable requires the Roman capitol to be represented, we find two officers enter, “to lay cushions, *as it were* in the capitol.” So, in *King Richard II. Act IV. sc. i.* Bolingbroke, &c. enter *as to the parliament*.” Again, in *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600: “Enter Cambridge, Scroop, and Gray, *as in a chamber*.” When the Citizens of Angiers were to appear on the walls of their town, and young Arthur to leap from the battlements, I suppose our auceftors were contented with seeing them in the Balcony already described, or perhaps a few boards were tacked together, and painted so as to refemble the rude difcoloured walls of an old town, behind which a platform might have been placed near the top, on which the citizens stood: but furely this can fcarcely be called a *scene*. Though undoubtedly our poet’s company were furnifhed with fome wooden fabrick fufficiently refembling a tomb, for which they muft have had occafion in feveral plays, yet

figures of Antonio and his children, appearing as if they were dead.” In *The Devil’s Charter*, a tragedy, 1607, the following stage direction is found: “Alexander draweth [that is, draws open] *the curtaine of his studie*, where he difcovereth the devill fitting in his pontificals.” Again in *Satiromastix*, by Decker, 1602: “Horace fitting in his *study*, behind a curtaine, a candle by him burning, books lying confufedly,” &c. In Marfton’s *What you will*, a com. 1607, the following stage-direction ftill more decifively proves this point: “Enter a School-maifter,—draws [i. e. draws open] the curtains *behind*, with Battus, Nows, Slip, Nathaniel, and Holifernes Pippo, fchool-boys, fitting with bookes in their handes.” Again in *Albovine*, by Sir William D’avenant, 1629: “He *drawes the Arras*, and *discovers* Albovine, Rhodolinda, Valdaura, dead in chaires.” Again, in *The Woman in the Moon*, by Lily, 1597: “They draw *the curtains* from before Natures fhop, where ftands an image clad, and fome unclad. They bring forth the cloathed image.” Again, in *Romeo and Juliet*, 1597, Juliet, after fhe has fwallowed the fleepy potion, is ordered to “throw herfelfe on the bed, *within the curtains*.” As foon as Juliet has fallen on the bed, the curtains being ftill open, the nurfe enters, then old Capulet and his lady, then the muficians; and all on the fame fpot. If they could have exhibited a bed-chamber, and then could have fubftituted any other room for it, would they have fuffered the muficians and the Nurfe’s fervant to have carried on a ludicrous dialogue in one where Juliet was fupposed to be lying dead?

¹ See thefe stage-directions in the firft folio.

yet some doubt may be entertained, whether in *Romeo and Juliet* any exhibition of Juliet's monument was given on the stage. Romeo perhaps only opened with his-mattock one of the stage trap-doors, (which might have represented a tomb-stone,) by which he descended to a vault beneath the stage, where Juliet was deposited; and this notion is countenanced by a passage in the play, and by the poem on which the drama was founded².

In all the old copies of the play last-mentioned we find the following stage-direction. "*They march about the stage, and serving-men come forth with their napkins.*" A more decisive proof than this, that the stage was not furnished with scenes, cannot be produced. Romeo, Mercutio, &c. with their torch-bearers and attendants, are the persons who march about the stage. They are in the street, on their way to Capulet's house, where a masquerade is given; but Capulet's servants who come forth with their napkins, are supposed to be in a hall or saloon of their master's house: yet both the masquers *without* and the servants *within* appear on the same spot. In like manner in *King Henry VIII.* the very same spot is at once the outside and inside of the Council-Chamber³.

It is not, however, necessary to insist either upon the term itself, in the sense of a painting in perspective on cloth or canvas, being unknown to our early writers, or upon the various stage-directions which are found in the plays of our poet and his contemporaries, and which afford the strongest presumptive evidence that the stage in his time was not furnished with scenes; because we have to the same point the concurrent testimony of Shakspeare himself⁴, of Ben Jonson, of every writer of the last age who has had occasion to mention this subject, and even of the very person who first introduced scenes on the publick stage.

10

² "Why I descend into this bed of death,—." *Romeo and Juliet*, Act V. So, in *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, 1362:

"And then our Romeus, the vault-stone set up-right,

"Descended downe, and in his hand he bore the candle light."

Juliet, however, after her recovery, speaks and dies upon the stage. If therefore, the exhibition was such as has been now supposed, Romeo must have brought her up in his arms from the vault beneath the stage, after he had killed Paris, and then addressed her,—*"O my love, my wife,"* &c.

³ See Vol. X.

⁴ "In your imagination hold

"*This stage, the ship, upon whose deck*

"*The sea-toft Pericles appears to speak.*"

In the year 1629 Jonson's comedy entitled *The New Inn* was performed at the Blackfriars theatre, and deservedly damned. Ben was so much incensed at the town for condemning his piece, that in 1631 he published it with the following title: "*The New Inn, or the light Heart*, a comedy; as it was never acted, but most negligently played, by some, the king's servants, and more squeamishly beheld and censured by others, the king's subjects, 1629: And now at last set at liberty to the readers, his Ma.^{ties} servants and subjects, to be judged, 1631." In the Dedication to this piece, the author, after expressing his profound contempt for the spectators, who were at the first representation of this play, says, "What did they come for then, thou wilt ask me. I will as punctually answer: to see and to be seene. To make a general muster of themselves in their clothes of credit, and possesse the stage against the play: to dislike all, but marke nothing: and by their confidence of rising between the actes in oblique lines, make affidavit to the whole house of their not understanding one scene. Arm'd with this prejudice, as *the stage furniture, or arras clothes*, they were there; as spectators away; for *the faces in the hangings* and they beheld alike."

The exhibition of plays being forbidden some time before the death of Charles I.^s, Sir William D'Avenant in 1656 invented a new species of entertainment, which was exhibited at Rutland House, at the upper end of Aldersgate-Street. The title of the piece, which was printed in the same year, is, *The Siege of Rhodes, made a representation by the art of prospective in scenes; and the story sung in Recitative musick*. "The original of this musick," says Dryden, "and of the scenes which adorned his work, he had from the Italian operas⁶; but he heightened his characters (as I may probably

⁵ An Ordinance for the suppressing of all stage-plays and interludes, was enacted Feb. 13. 1647-8, and Oliver and his Saints seem to have been very diligent in enforcing it. From Whitelocke's *Memorials*, p. 332, we learn that Captain Bethan was appointed (13 Dec. 1648,) Provost Martial, "with power to seize upon all ballad-singers, and to suppress stage-plays."

"20 Dec. 1649. Some stage-players in Saint John's-street [the *Red Bull* theatre was in this street,] were apprehended by troopers, their cloaths taken away, and themselves carried to prison." Ibidem, p. 419.

"Jan. 1655. [1655-6.] Players taken in Newcastle, and whipt for rogues." Ibid. 619.

"Sept. 4, 1656. William D'Avenant printed his Opera, notwithstanding the nicety of the times." Ibidem, p. 639.

⁶ Fleckno in the preface to his comedy entitled *Demoiselles a-la-Mode* 1667, observes, that "one Italian scene with four doors will do" for the representation.

bly imagine) from the examples of Corneille and some French poets." If, sixty years before, the exhibition of the plays of Shakspeare had been aided on the common stage by the advantage of moveable scenes, or if the term *scene* had been familiar to D'Avenant's audience, can we suppose that he would have found it necessary to use a periphrastick description, and to promise that his representation should be assisted by the art of *prospect* in scenes? "It has been often wished," says he in his Address to the Reader, "that our scenes (we having obliged ourselves to the variety of *five changes*, according to the ancient dramatick distinctions made for time,) had not been confined to about eleven feet in the height and about fifteen in depth, including the places of passage reserved for the musick." From these words we learn that he had in that piece five scenes. In 1658 he exhibited at the old theatre called the Cockpit, in Drury-lane, "*The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru, express'd by vocal and instrumental musick, and by art of perspective in scenes*." In Spring 1662, having obtained a patent from King Charles the Second, and built a new playhouse in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, he opened his theatre with *The First Part of the Siege of Rhodes*, which since its first exhibition he had enlarged. He afterwards in the same year exhibited *the Second Part of the Siege of Rhodes*, and his comedy called *The Wits*; "these plays," says Downes, who

⁶ In "The Publick Intelligencer, communicating the chief occurrences and proceedings within the dominions of England, Scotland and Wales, from Monday, December 20, to Monday, December, 27, 1658," I find the following notice taken of D'Avenant's exhibition by the new Protector, Richard:

"Whitehall, December 23.

"A course is ordered for taking into consideration the *Opera*, shewed at the Cockpitt in Drury Lane, and the persons to whom it stands referred, are to send for the poet and actors, and to inform themselves of the nature of the work, and to examine by what authority the same is exposed to publick view; and they are also to take the best information they can concerning the acting of stage-plays, and upon the whole to make report," &c.

The Saints were equally adverse to every other species of festivity as well as the Opera, and considered holydays, the common prayer-book, and a play-book, as equally pernicious; for in the same paper I find this notification:

"It was ordered by his Highness the Lord Protector and the Council, that effectual letters be written to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the city of London, and to the Justices of peace for Westminster and the liberties thereof, Middlesex and Borough of Southwark, to use their endeavour for abolishing the use of the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and other feasts called holydaies; as also for preventing the use of the common prayer-book."

who himself acted in *The Siege of Rhodes*, "having new scenes, and decorations, being the first that ever were introduced in England." Scenes had certainly been used before in the masques at Court, and in a few private exhibitions; and by D'Avenant himself in his attempts at theatrical entertainments shortly before the death of Cromwell: Downes therefore, who is extremely inaccurate in his language in every part of his book, must have meant—the first ever exhibited in a regular drama, on a publick theatre.

I have said that I could produce the testimony of Sir William D'Avenant himself on this subject. His prologue to *The Wits*, which was exhibited in the spring of the year 1662, soon after the opening of his theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, if every other document had perished, would prove decisively that our author's plays had not the assistance of painted scenes. "There are some," says D'Avenant,

"—who would the world persuade,
 "That gold is better when the stamp is bad;
 "And that an ugly ragged piece of eight
 "Is ever true in metal and in weight;
 "As if a guinny and louis had less
 "Intrinsic value for their handsomeness.
 "So diverse, who outlive the former age,
 "Allow * the coarseness of the plain old stage,
 "And think rich vests and scenes are only fit
 "Disguises for the want of art and wit."

And no less decisive is the different language of the licence for erecting a theatre, granted to him by King Charles I. in 1639, and the letters patent which he obtained from his son in 1662. In the former, after he is authorized "to entertain, govern, privilege, and keep such and so many players to exercise action, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, and the like, as he the said William D'Avenant shall think fit and approve for the said house, and such persons to permit and continue at and during the pleasure of the said W. D. to act plays in such house so to be by him erected, and exercise musick, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, or other the like, at the same or other hours, or times, or after plays are ended,"—the clause which empowers him to take certain prices from those who should resort to his theatre runs thus:

"And that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said W. D. &c. to take and receive of such our subjects as shall resort

* i. e. approve.

resort to see or hear any such *plays, scenes, and entertainments* whatsoever, such sum or sums of money, as is or hereafter from time to time shall be accustomed to be given or taken in other playhouses and places for the like plays, scenes, presentments, and entertainments."

Here we see that when the theatre was fitted up in the usual way of that time without the decoration of scenery, (for *scenes* in the foregoing passages mean, not paintings, but short stage-representations or presentments,) the usual prices were authorized to be taken; but after the Restoration, when Sir W. D'Avenant furnished his new theatre with scenery, he took care that the letters patent which he then obtained, should speak a different language, for there the corresponding clause is as follows:

"And that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Sir William D'Avenant, his heirs, and assigns, to take and receive of such our subjects as shall resort to see or hear any such plays, scenes, and entertainments whatsoever, such sum or sums of money, as either have accustomedly been given and taken in the like kind, or as shall be thought reasonable by him or them, in regard of the great expences of *SCENES*, musick, and such new decorations *as have not been formerly used.*"

Here for the first time in these letters patent the word *scene* is used in that sense in which Sir William had employed it in the printed title-pages of his musical entertainments exhibited a few years before. In the former letters patent granted in 1639, the word in that sense does not once occur.

To the testimony of D'Avenant himself may be added that of Dryden, both in the passage already quoted, and in his prologue to *The Rival Ladies*, performed at the King's Theatre in 1664:

"——— in former days

"Good prologues were as scarce as now good plays.—

"You now have habits, dances, *scenes*, and rhymes;

"High language often, ay, and sense sometimes."

And still more express is that of the author of *The Generous Enemies*, exhibited at the King's Theatre in 1672:

"I cannot choose but laugh, when I look back and see

"The strange vicissitudes of poetrie.

"Your aged fathers came to plays for wit,

"And sat knee-deep in nutshells in the pit;

"*Courts*

" *Course hangings then, instead of scenes, were worn,*
 " *And Kidderminster did the stage adorn :*
 " *But you, their wiser offspring, did advance*
 " *To plot of jig, and to dramattick dance ?," &c.*

These

7 This explains what Dryden means in his prologue to *The Royal Ladies*, quoted above, where, with *scenes* and the other novelties introduced after the Restoration, he mentions *dance*. A dance by a boy was not uncommon in Shakspeare's time; but such dances as were exhibited at the Duke's and King's theatre, which are here called *dramattick dances*, were unknown.

The following prologue to *Tunbridge Wells*, acted at the Duke's theatre, and printed in 1678, is more diffuse upon this subject, and confirms what has been stated in the text :

" The old English stage, confin'd to plot and sense,
 " Did hold abroad but small intelligence;
 " But since the invasion of the foreign scene,
 " Jack-pudding farce, and thundering machine,
 " Dainties to your grave ancestors unknown,
 " Who never dislik'd wit because their own,
 " There's not a player but is turn'd a scout,
 " And every scribler sends his envoys out,
 " To fetch from Paris, Venice, or from Rome,
 " Fantastick fopperies, to please at home.
 " And that each act may rise to your desire;
 " Devils and witches must each scene inspire;
 " Wit rowls in waves, and showers down in fire.
 " With what strange ease a play may now be writ!
 " When the best half's composed by painting it,
 " And that in the air or dance lies all the wit.
 " True sense or plot would fooleries appear
 " Faults, I suppose, you seldom meet with here,
 " For 'tis no mode to profit by the ear.
 " Your souls, we know, are seated in your eyes;
 " An actress in a cloud's a strange surprise,
 " And you ne'er pay'd treble prices to be wise."

The French theatre, as we learn from Scaliger, was not furnished with scenes, or even with the ornament of tapestry, in the year 1561. See Scaliger. *Poetices*, folio, 1561, lib. 1. c. 21. Both it, however, and the Italian stage, appear to have had the decoration of scenery before the English. In 1638 was published at Ravenna—*Pratica di fabbricar Scene e machine ne' teatri*, di Nicola Sabbatini da Pesaro. With respect to the French stage, see D'Avenant's Prologue to the *Second Part of the Siege of Rhodes*, 1663 :

" ——— many travellers here as judges come,
 " From Paris, Florence, Venice, and from Rome;
 " Who will describe, when any scene we draw,
 " By each of ours all that they ever saw :
 " Those praising for extensive breadth and height,
 " And inward distance to deceive the sight."

It is said in the Life of Betterton, that " he was sent to Paris by King Charles the Second, to take a view of the French theatre, that he

These are not the speculations of scholars concerning a custom of a former age, but the testimony of persons who were either spectators of what they describe, or daily conversed with those who had trod our ancient stage: for D'Avenant's first play, *The Cruel Brother*, was acted at the Blackfriars in January, 1626-7, and Mohun and Hart, who had themselves acted before the civil wars, were employed in that company, by whose immediate successors *The Generous Enemies* was exhibited; I mean the King's Servants. Major Mohun acted in the piece before which the lines last quoted were spoken.

I may add also, that Mr. Wright, the author of *Historia Histrionica*, whose father had been a spectator of several plays before the breaking out of the civil wars, expressly says, that the theatres had then *no scenes*.*

But, says Mr. Steevens, (who differs with me in opinion on the subject before us, and whose sentiments I shall give below,) "how happened it, that Shakspeare himself should have mentioned the act of *shifting scenes*, if in his time there were no scenes capable of being *shifted*? Thus in the Chorus to *King Henry V.*

"Unto Southampton do we *shift our scene*."

"This phrase" (he adds) "was hardly more ancient than the custom it describes."

Who does not see, that Shakspeare in the passage here quoted uses the word *scene* in the same sense in which it was used two thousand years before he was born; that is, for the place of action represented by the stage; and not for that moveable hanging or painted cloth, strained on a wooden frame, or rolled round a cylinder, which is now called a SCENE? If the smallest doubt could be entertained of his meaning,

he might better judge of what might contribute to the improvement of our own." He went to Paris probably in the year 1666, when both the London theatres were shut:

* "Shakspeare, (who, as I have heard, was a much better poet than player,) Burbage, Hemmings, and others of the older sort, were dead before I knew the town; but in my time, *before the wars*, Lowin used to act Falstaff," &c.—"Though the town was then not much more than half so populous as now, yet then the prices were small, (*there being no scenes*,) and better order kept among the company that came." *Historia Histrionica*, 8vo. 1699. This Essay is in the form of a Dialogue between *Trueman*, an old Cavalier, and *Loveluit*, his friend.

The account of the old stage, which is given by the Cavalier, Wright probably derived from his father, who was born in 1611, and was himself a dramatick writer.

* See Mr. Steevens's Shakspeare, 1785, K. *John*, p. 56, n. 7.

meaning, the following lines in the same play would remove it:

"The king is set from London, and the *scene*
"Is now transported to Southampton."

This, and this only, was the *shifting* that was meant; a movement from one place to another in the progress of the drama; nor is there found a single passage in his plays in which the word *scene* is used in the sense required to support the argument of those who suppose that the common stages were furnished with moveable scenes in his time. He constantly uses the word either for a stage-exhibition in general, or the component part of a play, or the place of action represented by the stage¹:

"For all my life has been but as a *scene*,
"Acting that argument." *K. Henry IV. P. II.*
"At your industrious *scenes* and acts of death."

K. John.

"What *scene* of death hath Roscius now to act?"
K. Henry VI. P. III.

"Thus with imagin'd wing our swift *scene* flies,—"
K. Henry V.

To

¹ And so do all the other dramattick writers of his time. So, in Heywood's *Downfall of Robert earl of Huntington*, 1601:

"—— I only mean—

"Myself in person to present some *scenes*

"Of tragick matter, or perchance of mirth."

Again in the prologue to *Ram Alley, or Merry Tricks*, a comedy, 1611:

"But if conceit, with quick-turn'd *scenae*,—

"May win your favours,—"

Again, in the prologue to *Late Lancashire Witches*, 1634:

"—— we are forc'd from our own nation

"To ground the *scene* that's now in agitation."

Again, in the prologue to Shirley's *School of Compliments*, 1629:

"—— This play is

"The first fruits of a muse, that before this

"Never saluted audience, nor doth meane

"To swear himself a factor for the *scene*."

Again, in the prologue to *Hannibal and Scipio*, 1637:

"The places sometimes chang'd too for the *scene*,

"Which is translated as the musick plays," &c.

Here translating a *scene* means just the same as *shifting a scene* in *K. Henry V.*

I forbear to add more instances, though almost every one of our old plays would furnish me with many.

"To give our *scene* such growing,—." *Ibid.*

"And so our *scene* must to the battle fly,—." *Ibid.*

"That he might play the woman in the *scene*."

Coriolanus.

"A queen in jest, only to fill the *scene*." *K. Rich. III.*

I shall add but one more instance from *Alps* well that ends well :

"Our *scene* is alter'd from a serious thing,

"And now *chang'd* to the Beggar and the King."

from which lines it might, I conceive, be as reasonably inferred that *scenes* were *changed* in Shakspeare's time, as from the passage relied on in *K. Henry V.* and perhaps by the same mode of reasoning it might be proved, from a line above quoted from the same play, that the technical modern term, *wings*, or side-scenes, was not unknown to our great poet.

The various circumstances which I have stated, and the accounts of the contemporary writers², furnish us, in my apprehension,

² All the writers on the ancient English stage that I have met with, concur with those quoted in the text on this subject: "Now for the difference betwixt our theatres and those of former times," (says Fleckno, who lived near enough the time to be accurately informed,) "they were but plain and simple, with no other *scenes* nor decorations of the stage, but only old tapestry, and the stage strewed with rushes; with their habits accordingly." *Short Discourse of the English Stage*, 1664. In a subsequent passage indeed he adds, "For *scenes* and machines, they are no new invention; our masques, and some of our *playes*, in former times, (though not so ordinary,) having had as good or rather better, than any we have now."—To reconcile this passage with the foregoing, the author must be supposed to speak here, not of the exhibitions at the publick theatres, but of masques and *private* plays, performed either at court or at noblemen's houses. He does not say, "some of our *theatres*,"—but, "our masques, and some of our *playes* having had," &c. We have already seen that *Love's Mistress* or the *Queen's Masque* was exhibited with *scenes* at Denmark-house in 1636. In the reign of king Charles I. the performance of plays at court, and at private houses, seems to have been very common; and gentlemen went to great expence in these exhibitions. See a letter from Mr. Garrard to lord Strafford, dated, Feb. 7, 1637; *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 150: "Two of the king's servants, privy-chamber men both, have writ each of them a play, Sir John Sutlin [Suckling] and Will. Barclay, which have been acted in court, and at the Black-friars, with much applause. Sutlin's play cost three or four hundred pounds setting out; eight or ten suits of new cloaths he gave the players; an unheard-of prodigality." The play on which Sir John Suckling expended this large sum, was *Aglaure*.

To the authority of Fleckno may be added that of Edward Phillips, who, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1674, [article D'Avenant,] praises that poet

benfion, with decisive and incontrovertible proofs³, that the ftage of Shakspeare was not furnifhed with *moveable painted fcenes*,

poet for "the great fluency of his wit and fancy, efpecially for what he wrote for the Englifh ftage, of which, having laid the foundation before by his mufical dramas, when the ufual plays were not fuffered to be acted, *he was the firft reviver and improver, by painted fcenes*." Wright alfo, who was well acquainted with the hiftory of our ancient ftage, and had certainly converfed with many perfons who had feen theatrical performances before the civil wars, exprefly fays, as I have obferved above, that "*fcenes* were firft introduced by Sir William D'Avenant, on the publick ftage, at the Duke's old theatre in Lincoln's-Innfields." "Prefently after the Reftoration," this writer informs us, "the king's players acted publickly at the Red Bull for fome time, and then removed to a new-built playhoufe in Vere-ftreet, by Clare-market. There they continued for a year or two, and then removed to the theatre-royal in Drury-lane, where they firft made ufe of *SCENES*, which had been a little before introduced UPON THE PUBLICK STAGE by Sir W. D'Avenant at the Duke's old theatre in Lincoln's-Innfields, but afterwards very much improved, with the addition of curious machines, by Mr. Betterton, at the new theatre in Dorfet Gardens, to the great expence and continual charge of the players." *Hiftoria Hiftorica*, 8vo. 1699, p. 10. Wright calls it the Duke's old theatre in Lincoln's Inn fields, though in fact in 1663 it was a new building, becaufe when he wrote, it had become old, and a new theatre had been built in Lincoln's Inn fields in 1695. He is here fpeaking of *player and players*, and therefore makes no account of the mufical entertainments exhibited by D'Avenant a few years before at Rutland Houfe, and at the Cock-pit in Drury-lane, in which a little attempt at fcenery had been made. In thofe pieces, I believe, no ftage-player performed.

³ I fubjoin the fentiments of Mr. Steevens, who differs with me in opinion on this fubject; obferving only that in general the paffages to which he alludes, prove only that our author's plays were not exhibited without the aid of *machinery*, which is not denied; and that not a fingle paffage is quoted, which proves that a moveable painted fcene was employed in any of his plays in his theatre. The lines quoted from *The Staple of News*, at the bottom of p. 38, muft have been tranfcribed from fome incorrect edition, for the original copy printed in 1631, reads—*SCENE*, not *SCENES*; a variation of fome importance. The words—"the various fhifting of their *SCENE*," denote, in my apprehenfion, nothing more than frequent change of place in the progrefs of the drama: and even if that were not the cafe, and thefe words were ufed in the modern fenfe, they would not prove that fcenes were employed on the ftage in Shakspeare's time, for *The Staple of News* was not exhibited till March, 1625-6.

"It muft be acknowledged," fays Mr Steevens, "that little more is advanced on this occafion, than is fairly fupported by the testimony of contemporary writers.

"Were we, however, to reafon on fuch a part of the fubject as is now before us, fome fufpicions might arife, that where machinery was difcovered, the lefs complicated adjunct of fcenes was fcarcely wanting. When the column is found ftanding, no one will fuppoſe but that it

scenes, but merely decorated with curtains, and arras or tapestry hangings, which, when decayed, appear to have been

was once accompanied by its usual entablature. If this inference be natural, little impropriety can be complained of in one of the stage-directions above mentioned. Where the bed is introduced, the scene of a bed-chamber (a thing too common to deserve description) would of course be at hand. Neither should any great stress be laid on the words of Sir Philip Sidney. Are we not still obliged to receive the stage alternately as a garden, as an ocean, as a range of rocks, or as a cavern? With all our modern advantages, so much of *waisemblance* is wanting in a theatre, that the apologies which Shakspeare offers for scenical deficiency, are still in some degree needful; and be it always remembered that Sir Philip Sidney has not positively declared that *no* painted scenes were in use. Who that mentions the present stage, would think it necessary to dwell on the article of scenery, unless it were peculiarly striking and magnificent? Sir Philip has not spoken of stage-habits, and are we therefore to suppose that none were worn? Besides, between the time when Sir Philip wrote his *Defence of Poesy*, and the period at which the plays of Shakspeare were presented, the stage in all probability had received much additional embellishment. Let me repeat, that if in 1529 (the date of *Acolastus*) machinery * is known to have existed, in 1592 (when Shakspeare commenced a play-wright) a greater number of ornaments might naturally be expected, as it is usual for one improvement to be soon followed by another. That the plays of Shakspeare were exhibited with the aid of *machinery*, the following stage-directions, copied from the folio 1623, will abundantly prove. In *The Tempest*, Ariel is said to enter "like a harpey, claps his wings on the table, and with a quaint device the banquet vanishes." In a subsequent scene of the same play, Juno "Descends;" and in *Cymbeline*, Jupiter "descends likewise, in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle." In *Macbeth*, "the cauldron *sinks*, and the apparitions *rise*." It may be added that the dialogue of Shakspeare has such perpetual reference to objects supposed visible to the audience, that the want of scenery could not have failed to render many of the descriptions uttered by his speakers absurd and laughable.—Macduff examines the outside of Inverness castle with such minuteness, that he distinguishes even the nests which the martins had built under the projecting parts of its roof.—Romeo, standing in a garden, points to the tops of fruit-trees gilded by the moon.—The prologue-speaker to the *second part of K. Henry IV.* expressly shews the spectators "*this* worm-eaten hold of ragged stone," in which Northumberland was lodged. Jachimo takes the most exact inventory of every article in Imogen's bed-chamber, from the filk and silver of which her tapestry was wrought, down

* What happy deceptions could be produced by the aid of framework and painted canvas, we may learn from Hollinshed, and yet more ancient historians. The pageants and tournaments at the beginning of Henry VIIIth's reign very frequently required that the castles of imaginary beings should be exhibited. Of such contrivances some descriptions remain. These extempore buildings afforded a natural introduction to scenery on the stage.

been sometimes ornamented with pictures⁴: and some passages
E 2 in

down to the Cupids that support her andirons. Had not the inside of this apartment, with its proper furniture, been represented, how ridiculous must the action of Jachimo have appeared! He must have stood looking out of the room for the particulars supposed to be visible within it. In one of the parts of *K. Henry VI.* a cannon is discharged against a tower; and conversations are held in almost every scene from different walls, turrets, and battlements. Nor is my belief in ancient scenery entirely founded on conjecture. In the folio editions of Shakspeare's plays, 1623, the following traces of it are preserved. In *King John*: "Enter, before Angiers, Philip king of France," &c.—"Enter a citizen upon the walls."—"Enter the herald of France with trumpets to the gates."—"Enter Arthur on the walls." In *K. Hen. V.* "Enter the king, &c. with scaling ladders at Harfleur."—"Enter the king with all his train before the gates." In *K. Hen. VI.* "Enter to the protector at the Tower gates," &c.—"Enter Salisbury and Talbot on the walls."—"The French leap over the walls in their shirts."—"Enter Pucelle on the top of the tower, thrusting out a torch burning."—"Enter lord Scales upon the tower walking. Then enter two or three citizens below."—"Enter the king and queen and Somerset on the terrace."—"Enter three watchmen to guard the king's tent." In *Coriolanus*: "Marcus follows them to the gates, and is shut in." In *Timon*: "Enter Timon in the woods *."—"Enter Timon from his cave." In *Julius Caesar*: "Enter Brutus in his orchard," &c. &c.—In short, without characteristick discriminations of place, the historical dramas of Shakspeare in particular, would have been wrapped in tenfold confusion and obscurity; nor could the spectator have felt the poet's power, or accompanied his rapid transitions from one situation to another, without such guides as painted canvas only could supply. The audience would with difficulty have received the catastrophe of *Romeo and Juliet* as natural and affecting, unless the deception was confirmed to them by the appearance of a tomb. The managers who could raise ghosts, bid the cauldron sink into the earth, and then exhibit a train of royal phantoms in *Macbeth*, could with less difficulty supply the flat paintings of a cavern or a grove. The artists who can put the dragons of *Medea* in motion, can more easily represent the clouds through which they are to pass. But for these, or such assistances, the spectator, like Hamlet's mother, must have bent his gaze on mortifying vacancy; and with the guest invited by the Barmecide, in the Arabian tale, must have furnished from his own imagination the entertainment of which his eyes were solicited to partake.

"It should likewise be remembered, that the intervention of civil war would easily occasion many customs of our early theatres to be silently forgotten

* Apemantus must have pointed to the scenes as he spoke the following lines:

"——— shame not these woods,
" By putting on the cunning of a carper."

Again:

"——— will these moist trees
" That have outliv'd the eagle," &c.

A piece of old tapestry must have been regarded as a poor substitute for these towering shades.

in our old dramas incline me to think, that when tragedies were performed, the stage was hung with black⁵.

In

forgotten. The times when Wright and Downes produced their respective narratives, were by no means times of exactness or curiosity. What they heard, might have been heard imperfectly; it might have been unskilfully related; or their own memories might have deceived them:

"Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura."

"One assertion made by the latter of these writers, is chronologically disproved. We may remark likewise, that in *private* theatres, a part of the audience was admitted on the stage, but that this licence was refused in the *publick* play-houses. To what circumstance shall we impute this difference between the customs of the one and the other? Perhaps the *private* theatres had no scenes, the *publick* had; and a crowded stage would prevent them from being commodiously beheld, or conveniently shifted *. The *fresh pictures* mentioned by Ben Jonson in the induction to his *Cynthia's Revels* might be properly introduced to cover old tapestry; for to hang pictures over faded arras, was then and is still sufficiently common in antiquated mansions, such as those in which the scenes of dramatic writers are often laid. That Shakspeare himself was no stranger to the magick of theatrical ornaments, may be inferred from a passage in which he alludes to the scenery of *pageants*, the fashionable shews of his time:

"Sometimes we see a cloud that's dragonish,

"A vapour sometimes like a lion, a bear,

"A towred citadel, a pendent rock,

"A forced mountain, or blue promontory

"With trees upon't, that nod unto the world,

"And mock our eyes with air:—these thou hast seen,

"They are black Vesper's *pageants* †." *Antony and Cleopatra*.

"To conclude the richest and most expensive scenes had been introduced to dress up those spurious children of the Muse called Masques; nor have we sufficient reason for believing that Tragedy, her legitimate offspring, continued to be exposed in rags, while appendages more suitable to her dignity were known to be within the reach of our ancient managers. Shakspeare, Burbage, and Conell, must have had frequent opportunities of being acquainted with the mode in which both masques, tragedies, and comedies, were represented in the inns of court, the halls of noblemen, and in the palace itself."

* To *shift a scene* is at least a phrase employed by Shakspeare himself in *K. Henry V.*

"_____ and not till then

"Unto Southampton do we *shift our scene*."

and by Ben Jonson, yet more appositely, in *The Staple of News*:

"*Lic.* Have you no news o' the stage?

"*Tbo.* O yes;

"There is a legacy left to the king's players,

"Both for their *various shifting of their scenes*,

"And dextrous change of their persons to all shapes

"And all disguises," &c.

† After a pageant had passed through the streets, the characters that composed it were assembled in some hall or other spacious apartment, where they delivered their respective speeches, and were finally set out to view with the advantages of proper scenery and decoration.

In the early part, at least, of our author's acquaintance with the theatre, the want of scenery seems to have been supplied by the simple expedient of writing the names of the different places where the scene was laid in the progress of the play, which were disposed in such a manner as to be visible to the audience⁴.

Though the apparatus for theatrick exhibitions was thus scanty, and the machinery of the simplest kind, the invention of trap-doors appears not to be modern; for in an old Morality, entitled, *All for Money*, we find a marginal direction, which implies that they were very early in use⁵. We

4 "Sir Crack, I am none of your fresh pictures, that use to beautify the decayed old arras, in a publick theatre." Induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, by Ben Jonson, 1601.

5 In the induction to an old tragedy called *A warning for fair Women*, 1599, three personages are introduced, under the names of *Tragedy*, *Comedy*, and *History*. After some contest for superiority, *Tragedy* prevails; and *History* and *Comedy* retire with these words:

Hist. "Look, *Comedie*, I mark'd it not till now,

"The stage is hung with blacke, and I perceive

"The auditors prepar'd for tragedie.

Com. "Nay then, I fee she shall be entertain'd.

"These ornaments beseeem not thee and me;

"Then *Tragedie*, kill them to-day with sorrow,

"We'll make them laugh with mirthful jests to-morrow."

So in Marston's *Insatiate Countesse*, 1613:

"The stage of heaven is hung with solemn black,

A time best fitting to act tragedie."

Again, in Daniel's *Civil Warres*, B. V. 1602:

"Let her be made the sable stage, whereon

"Shall first be acted bloody tragedie."

Again in *K. Henry VI.* P. 1.

"Hung be the heavens with black," &c.

Again, more appositely, in *The Rape of Lucrece*, 1594:

"Black stage for tragedies, and murders fell."

6 "What child is there, that coming to a play and seeing *Thebes* written upon an old door, doth believe that it is *Thebes*?" *Defence of Poesie*, by Sir Philip Sidney. Signat. G. 1595.

When D'Avenant introduced scenes on the publick stage, this ancient practice was still followed. See his Introduction to his *Siege of Rhodes*, 1656: "In the middle of the freeze was a compartement, wherein was written—RHODES."

7 Here—with some fine conveyance, *Pleasure* shall appeare from beneath." *All for Money*, 1578.

So, in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602:

"Enter Balurdo from under the stage."

In the fourth act of *Macbeth*, several apparitions arise from beneath the stage, and again descend.—The cauldron likewise sinks:

"Why sinks that cauldron, and what noise is this?"

In the *Roaring Girl*, a comedy by Middleton and Decker, 1611, there is a character called *Trap-door*.

We learn from Heywood's *Apology for Actors*⁸, that the covering, or internal roof, of the stage, was anciently termed *the heavens*. It was probably painted of a sky-blue colour; or perhaps pieces of drapery tinged with blue were suspended across the stage, to represent the heavens.

It appears from the stage-directions⁹ given in *The Spanish Tragedy*, that when a play was exhibited within a play, (if I may so express myself,) as is the case in that piece and in *Hamlet*, the court or audience before whom the interlude was performed sat in the balcony, or upper stage, already described; and a curtain or traverse being hung across the stage *for the nonce*, the performers entered between that curtain and the general audience, and on its being drawn, began their piece, addressing themselves to the balcony, and regardless of the spectators in the theatre, to whom their backs must have been turned during the whole of the performance.

From a plate prefixed to Kirkman's *Drolls*, printed in 1672, in which there is a view of a theatrical booth, it should seem that the stage was formerly lighted by two large branches, of a form similar to those now hung in churches; and from Beaumont's Verses prefixed to Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, which was acted before the year 1611, we find that wax lights were used¹.

These branches having been found inconvenient, as they obstructed the sight of the spectators², gave place at a subsequent

⁸ *Apol. for Actors*, 1612. Signat. D.

⁹ *Spanish Tragedy*, 1610, Act IV. Signat. L.

"Enter Hieronimo. He knocks up the curtain.

"Enter the duke of Castile.

"Cast. How now Hieronimo, where's your fellows,

"That you take all this pains?

"Hiero. O, sir, it is for the author's credit

"To look that all things may go well.

"But good my lord, let me entreat your grace,

"To give the king the copy of the play.

"This is the argument of what we shew.

"Cast. I will, Hieronimo.

"Hiero. Let me entreat your grace, that when

"The train are past into the gallery,

"You would vouchsafe to throw me down the key.

"Cast. I will, Hieronimo.

Enter Balthazar, with a chair.

"Hiero. Well done, Balthazar; hang up the tilt:

"Our scene is Rhodes. What, is your beard on?"

Afterwards the tragedy of *Solyman and Perseda* is exhibited before the king of Spain, the duke of Castile, &c.

¹ "Some like, if the wax lights be new that day."

² Fleckno in 1664, complains of the bad lighting of the stage, even

quent period to small circular wooden frames, furnished with candles, eight of which were hung on the stage, four at either side: and these within a few years were wholly removed by Mr. Garrick, who, on his return from France in 1765, first introduced the present commodious method of illuminating the stage by lights not visible to the audience.

The body of the house was illuminated by cressets³, or large open lanterns of nearly the same size with those which are fixed in the poop of a ship.

If all the players whose names are enumerated in the first folio edition of our author's works, belonged to the same theatre, they composed a numerous company; but it is doubtful whether they all performed at the same period, or always continued in the same house⁴. Many of the companies, in the infancy of the stage, certainly were so thin, that the same person played two or three parts⁵; and a battle on which the fate of an empire was supposed to depend, was decided by half a dozen combatants⁶. It appears to have been a common practice in their mock engagements, to discharge small pieces of ordnance on or behind the stage⁷.

Before

at that time: "Of this curious art [scenery] the Italians (this latter age) are the greatest masters; the French good proficient; and we in England only scholars and learners yet, having proceeded no farther than to bare painting, and not arrived to the stupendous wonders of your great ingeniers; especially not knowing yet how to place our lights, for the more advantage and illuminating of the scenes." *Short Discourse of the English stage.*

³ See Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611. in v. *Falot*; "A cresset light, (such as they use in playhouses,) made of ropes wreathed, pitched, and put into small and open cages of iron."

The watchmen of London carried cressets fixed on poles till 1539 (and perhaps later). Stowe's *Survey*, p. 160, edit. 1618.

⁴ An actor, who wrote a pamphlet against Mr. Pope, soon after the publication of his edition of Shakspeare, says, he could prove that they belonged to several different companies. It appears from the MS. Register of lord Stanhope, treasurer of the chamber to king James I. that *Joseph Taylor*, in 1613, was at the head of a distinct company from that of *Heminge*, called the lady Elizabeth's servants, who then acted at the Hope on the Bankside. He was probably however, before that period, of the king's company, of which afterwards he was a principal ornament. Some of the players too, whose names are prefixed to the first folio edition of our author, were dead in the year 1600, or soon after; and others there enumerated, might have appeared at a subsequent period, to supply their loss. See the *Catalogue of Actors*, post.

⁵ In the Induction to Masson's *Antonio and Melinda*, 1602, *Piero* asks *Alberto*, what part he acts. He replies, "the necessity of the play forceth me to act two parts." See also the *Dramatis Personæ* of many of our ancient plays, and below, p. 84, n. 2.

⁶ "And so our scene must to the battle fly,

"Where, O for pity! we shall much disgrace

"With

Before the exhibition began, three flourishes were played, or, in the ancient language, there were three soundings⁷. Musick was likewise played between the acts⁸. The instruments chiefly used, were trumpets, cornets, hautboys, lutes, recorders, viols, and organs¹. The band, which, I believe, did not consist of more than eight or ten performers, sat (as I have been told by a very ancient stage-veteran, who had his information from Boman, the contemporary of Betterton,) in

"With four or five most vile and ragged foils,

"Right ill dispos'd, in brawl ridiculous,

"The name of Agincourt." *K. Henry V.* Act IV.

7. "Much like to some of the players that come to the scaffold with drumme and trumpet, to proffer skirmishe, and when they have sounded alarme, off go the pieces, to encounter a shadow, or conquer a paper-monster." *Schoole of Abuse*, By Stephen Gosson, 1579.

So, in *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the Death of good King Henrie the Sixth*, 1600: "Alarmes to the battaile.—York flies; then the chambers be discharged; then enter the king," &c.

8 "Come, let's bethink ourselves, what may be found

"To deceive time with, till the second sound."

Notes from Black-fryars, by H. Fitz-Jeffery, 1617.

See also the Address to the readers, prefixed to Decker's *Satiromastix*, a comedy, 1602: "Instead of the trumpets sounding thrice before the play begin," &c.

9 See the Prologue to *Hannibal and Scipio*, a tragedy, 1637:

"The places sometimes chang'd too for the scene,

"Which is translated, as the musick plays

"Betwixt the acts."

The practice appears to have prevailed in the infancy of our stage. See the concluding lines of the second act of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, 1575:

"In the towne will I, my frendes to vyfit there

"And hether straight again, to see the end of this gere:

"In the mean time, fellows, pipe upp your fiddles, I say take them,

"And let your freyndes here such mirth as ye can make them."

It has been thought by some that our author's dramas were exhibited without any pauses, in an unbroken continuity of scenes. But this appears to be a mistake. In a copy of *Romeo and Juliet*, 1599, now before me, which certainly belonged to the play-house, the endings of the acts are marked in the margin; and directions are given for musick to be played between each act. The marginal directions in this copy appear to be of a very old date, one of them being in the ancient style and hand—"Play musicke."

1 See the stage-directions in Marston's *Sophonisba*, acted at the Black-friars theatre, in 1606:

"The ladies draw the curtains about *Sophonisba*; — the cornets and organs playing loud full musicke for the act. Signat. B. 4.

"Organ mixt with recorders for this act. Signat. D. 2.

"Organs, viols, and voices, play for this act. Signat. E. 2.

"A base lute and a treble viol play for this act." Signat. F. 2.

in an upper balcony, over what is now called the stage-box².

From Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript I learn, that the musicians belonging to Shakspeare's company were obliged to pay the Master of the Revels an annual fee for a licence to play in the theatre³.

Not very long after our poet's death the Blackfriars' band, was more numerous^{*}; and their reputation was so high as to be noticed by Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke, in an account which he has left of the splendid Masque given by the four Inns of Court on the second of February, 1633-4, entitled *The Triumph of Peace*, and intended, as he himself informs us, "to manifest the difference of their opinion from Mr. Prynne's new learning, and to confute his *Histrionastix* against interludes."

A very particular account of this masque is found in his *Memorials*; but that which Dr. Burney has lately given in his very curious and elegant *History of Musick*⁴, from a manuscript in the possession of Dr. Moreton, of the British Museum, contains some minute particulars not noticed in the former printed account, and among others an eulogy on our poet's band of musicians.

"For the Musicke," says Whitelocke, "which was particularly committed to my charge, I gave to Mr. Ives, and to Mr. Lawes, 100*l*. a piece for their rewards: for the four French gentlemen, the queen's servants, I thought that a handsome and liberall gratifying of them would be made known to the queen, their mistress, and well taken by her. I there-

E 5

² In the last scene of Massinger's *City Madam*, which was first acted at Blackfriars, May 25, 1632, Orpheus is introduced chanting those ravishing strains with which he moved

"Charon and Cerberus, to give him way

"To fetch from hell his lost Eurydice."

The following stage-direction, which is found in the preceding scene, supports what has been suggested above, concerning the station of the musicians in our ancient theatres: "Musicians *come down*, [i. e. *are to come down*,] to make ready for the song at Arras." This song was to be sung behind the arras.

³ "For a warrant to the Musitions of the king's company, this 9th of Aprill, 1627,—*L. I. O. O.*" M*s*. Herbert.

⁴ Vol. III. p. 376.

^{*} In a warrant of protection now before me, signed by Sir Henry Herbert, and dated from the Office of the Revels, Dec. 27, 1624, Nicholas Underhill, Robert Pallant, John Rhodes, and seventeen others, are mentioned as being "all imployed by the kings Ma^{ties} servants in their quality of playinge as musitions, and other necessary attendants."

fore invited them one morning to a collation att St. Dunstan's taverne, in the great room, the Oracle of Apollo, where each of them had his plate lay'd by him, covered, and the napkin by it, and when they opened their plates, they found in each of them forty pieces of gould, of their master's coyne, for the first dish, and they had cause to be much pleased with this surprisall.

"The rest of the musitians had rewards answearable to their parts and qualities; and the whole charge of the musicke came to about one thousand pounds. The clothes of the horsemen reckoned one with another at £.100 a suit, att the least, amounted to £.10,000.—The charges of all the rest of the masque, which were borne by the societies, were accounted to be above twenty thousand pounds.

"I was so conversant with the musitians, and so willing to gain their favour, especially at this time, that I composed an aier my selfe, with the assistance of Mr. Ives, and called it *Whitlocke's Coranto*; which being cried up, was first played publicly by the Blackefryars Musicke, who were then esteemed the best of common musitians in London. Whenever I came to that house, (as I did sometimes in those dayes, though not often,) to see a play, the musitians would presently play *Whitlocke's Coranto*; and it was so often called for, that they would have it played twice or thrice in an afternoone. The queen hearing it, would not be persuaded that it was made by an Englishman, bicause she said it was fuller of life and spirit than the English aiers used to be; butt she honoured the *Coranto* and the maker of it with her majestyes royall commendation. It grew to that request, that all the common musitians in this towne, and all over the kingdome, gott the composition of itt, and played it publicly in all places for above thirtie years after."

The stage in Shakspeare's time seems to have been separated from the pit only by pales⁵. Soon after the Restoration, the band, I imagine, took the station which they have kept ever since, in an orchestra placed between the stage and the pit⁶.

The

⁵ "And now that I have vaulted up so hye,
"Above the stage-rayles of this earthen globe,
"I must turn actor." *Black Booke*, 4to. 1604.

See also D'Avenant's *Playhouse to be let*:

"Monsieur, you may draw up your troop of forces
"Within the pales."

⁶ See the first direction in *The Tempest*, altered by D'Avenant and Dryden, and acted at the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, in 1667:

The person who spoke the prologue, who entered immediately after the third sounding⁷, usually wore a long black velvet cloak⁸, which, I suppose, was considered as best suited to a supplicatory address. Of this custom, whatever may have been its origin, some traces remained till very lately; a black coat having been, if I mistake not, within these few years, the constant stage-habiliment of our modern prologue-speakers. The complete dress of the ancient prologue-speaker is still retained in the play exhibited in *Hamlet*, before the King and court of Denmark.

An epilogue does not appear to have been a regular appendage to a play in Shakspeare's time; for many of his dramas had none; at least, they have not been preserved. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *As you like it*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *The Tempest*, the epilogue is spoken

"The front of the stage is opened, and the band of twenty-four violins, with the hapsicals and theorbos, which accompany the voices, are placed between the pit and the stage." If this had not been a novel regulation, the direction would have been unnecessary.

Cotgrave in his Dictionary, 1611, following the idea of ancient Rome, defines *Orchestra*, "The senators' or noblemen's places in a theatre, between the stage and the common seats. Also the stage itself." If musicians had set in this place, when he wrote, or the term *orchestra*, in its present sense, had been then known, there is reason to believe that he would have noticed it. See his interpretation of *Falot*, above, in p. 79, n. 3.

The word *orchestra* is not found in Minshew's Dict. nor Bullokar's *Expositor*.

In Cockeram's *Interpreter of hard words*, 1655, it is defined a scaffold.

⁷ "Present not your selfe on the stage, (especially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath by rubbing got cullor into his cheeks, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue, that he's upon the point to enter." Decker's *Guls Hornebook*, 1609.

⁸ See the Induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601:

1. *Child*. "Pray you, away; why children, what do you mean?"

2. *Child*. "Marry, that you should not speak the prologue."

1. *Child*. "Sir, I plead possession of the cloak. Gentlemen, your suffrages, for God's sake."

So, in the prologue to *The Coronation*, by Shirley, 1640:

"Since 'tis become the title of our play,

"A woman once in a coronation may

"With pardon speak the prologue, give as free

"A welcome to the theatre, as he

"That with a little beard, a long black cloak,

"With a starch'd face and supple leg, hath spoke

"Before the plays this twelvemonth, let me then

"Present a welcome to these gentlemen."

Again, in the prologue to *The Woman-Hater*, by B. and Fletcher, 1607: "Gentlemen, inductions are out of date, and a prologue in verse is as stale as a black velvet cloake, and a bay garlande."

spoken by one of the persons of the drama, and adapted to the character of the speaker; a circumstance that I have not observed in the epilogues of any other author of that age. The epilogue was not always spoken by one of the performers in the piece; for that subjoined to *The Second Part of King Henry IV.* appears to have been delivered by a dancer.

The performers of male characters frequently wore periwigs⁹, which in the age of Shakspeare were not in common use¹. It appears from a passage in Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, that vizards were on some occasions used by the actors of those days²; and it may be inferred from a scene in one of our author's comedies, that they were sometimes worn in his time, by those who performed female characters³. But this, I imagine, was very rare. Some of the female part of the audience likewise appeared in masks⁴.

Both

⁹ See *Hamlet*, Act III. sc. ii. "O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters."

So, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "As none wear hoods but monks and ladies, — and feathers but fore-horses, &c. none periwigs but players and pictures."

¹ In Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, 1597, Lib. III. Sat. 5, the fashion of wearing periwigs is ridiculed as a novel and fantaslick custom:

"Late travailing along in London way,
"Mee met, as seem'd by his *d'guis'd* array,
"A lustie courtier, whose curled head
"With abron locks was fairely furnished;
"I him saluted in our lavish wife;
"He answers my untimely courtesies.
"His bonnet vail'd, — or ever he could think,
"The unruly winde blowes off his *periwinke*.
"He lights and runs, and quickly hath him sped,
"To over-take his over-running head. —
"Is't not sweet pride, when men their crownes must shade
"With that which jerks the hams of every jade;
"Or floor-flrow'd locks from off the barber's shears?
"But waxen crownes well gree with borrowed haire."

² " — partly (says he) to supply the want of players, when there were more parts than there were persons."

³ In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Flute objects to his playing a woman's part, because he has "a beard a coming." But his friend Quince tells him, "that's all one; you shall play it in a *mask*, and you may speak as small as you will."

⁴ "In our assemblies at playes in London, (says Gasson, in his *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, Signat. C.) you shall see such heaving and shoving, such ytching and should'ring to sitte by women, such care for their garments, that they be not trode on; such eyes to their lappes, that no chippes light in them; such pillows to their backes, that they take no hurte; such *moisting* in their ears, I know not what; such giving them pippina to pass the time; such playing at foot-faunte without cardes; such

Both the prompter, or book-holder, as he was sometimes called, and the property-man, appear to have been regular appendages of our ancient theatres.

The stage-dresses, it is reasonable to suppose, were much more costly in some playhouses than others. Yet the wardrobe of even the king's servants at *The Globe* and *Blackfriars* was, we find, but scantily furnished; and our author's dramas derived very little aid from the splendor of exhibition.

It is well known, that in the time of Shakspeare, and for

such licking, such toying, such smiling, such winking, such manning them home when the sports are ended, that it is a right comedy to mark their behaviour."

So also the prologue to Marston's *Fawne*, 1606:

" ——— nor doth he hope to win

" Your laud or hand with that most common sin

" Of vulgar pens, rank bawdry, that smells

" Even through your masks, *usque ad nauseam*."

Again, in his *Scourge of Villainie*, 1599:

" ——— Disguised Messaline,

" I'll teare thy *maske*, and bare thee to the eyne

" Of hissing boyes, if to the theatres

" I find thee once more come for lecherers."

Again, in B. Johnson's verses, addressed to Fletcher on his *Faithful Shepherdess*:

" The wise and many-headed bench that sits

" Upon the life and death of plays and wits,

" Compos'd of gamester, captain, knight, knights man,

" Lady or *pupil*, that wears *maske* or fan,

" Velvet or taffata cap, rank'd in the dark

" With the shops foreman, or some such brave sparke,

" (That may judge for his *suspence*) had, before

" They saw it half, damn'd thy whole play."

After the Restoration, masks, I believe, were chiefly worn in the theatre, by women of the town. Wright complains of the great number of masks in his time: "Of late the play-houses are so extremely pestered with vizard-masks and their trade, (occasioning continual quarrels and abuses) that many of the more civilized part of the town are uneasy in the company, and shun the theatre as they would a house of scandal." *Hist. Histrian*. 1699, p. 6.

Ladies of unblemished character, however, wore masks in the boxes, in the time of Congreve. In the epilogue to Dursley's comedy called *The old mode and the new*, (no date) the speaker points to the masks in the side boxes: but I am not sure whether what are now called the balconies were not meant.

"I assure you, sir, we are not so officiously befriended by him, [the author,] as to have his presence in the tiring-house, to prompt us aloud, stamp at the book-holder, swear for our properties, curse the poor tinsman, rattle the musick out of tune, &c. Induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601.

See the Induction to Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*, acted by the king's servants, in 1631:

"O Curiosity,

many years afterwards, female characters were represented solely by boys or young men. Nashe in a pamphlet published in 1592, speaking in defence of the English stage, *boasts* that the players of his time were "not as the players beyond sea, a sort of squirting bawdie comedians, that have whores and common curtizans to play women's parts⁷." What Nashe considered as an high eulogy on his country, Prynne has made one of his principal charges against the English stage; having employed several pages in his bulky volume, and quoted many hundred authorities, to prove that "those playes wherein any men act women's parts in women's apparell must needs be sinful, yea, abominable unto christians⁸." The grand basis of his argument is a text in scripture; *Deuteronomy*, ch. xxii. v. 5. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment:" a precept, which Sir Richard Baker has justly remarked, is no part of the moral law, and ought not to be understood literally. "Where (says Sir Richard) finds he this precept? Even in the same place where he finds also that we must not weare cloaths of linsley-woolsey: and seeing we lawfully now wear cloaths of linsley-woolsey, why may it not be as lawful for men to put on women's garments⁹?"

It may perhaps be supposed that Prynne, having thus vehemently inveighed against men's representing female characters on the stage, would not have been averse to the introduction of

* O Curiosity, you come to see who wears the new suit to-day; whose cloaths are best pen'd, whatever the part be; which actor has the best leg and foot; what king plays *without cuffs*, and his queen *without gloves*: who rides post in *stockings*, and dances in *boots*."

It is however, one of Prynne's arguments against the stage, in the invective which he published about eight years after the date of this piece, that "the ordinary theatrical interludes were usually acted in *over-costly*, effeminate, fantastick, and *garudy* apparel." *Histriomastix*, p. 216. But little credit is to be given to that voluminous zealot, on a question of this kind. As the frequenters of the theatre were little better than incarnate devils, and the musick in churches the *bleating of brute beasts*, so a piece of coarse stuff trimmed with tinsel was probably in his opinion a most splendid and *ungodly* dress.

⁷ *Pierce Penniles his Supplication to the Devil*, 4to. 1592.

⁸ *Histriomastix*, 4to. 1633, p. 179.

⁹ *Theatrum Triumphans*, 8vo. 1670, p. 16. Martin Luther's comment on this text is as follows: "Hic non prohibetur quin ad vitandum periculum, aut ludendum joco, vel ad fallendum hostes, mulier possit gerere arma viri, et vir uti vesti muliebri; sed ut serio et usitato habitu talia non fiant, ut decora utrique sexui servetur dignitas." And the learned Jesuit, Lorin, concurs with him: "Dissimulatio vestis potest interdum sine peccato fieri, vel ad representandum comice tragiceve personam, vel ad effugendum periculum, vel in casu simili." *Ibid.* p. 19.

of women in the scene; but sinful as this zealot thought it in men to assume the garments of the other sex, he considered it as not less abominable in women to tread the stage in their own proper dress: for he informs us, that "some Frenchwomen, or *monsters* rather, in Michaelmas term, 1629, attempted to act a French play at the playhouse in Blackfriars," which he represents as "an impudent, shameful, unwomanish, graceless, if not more than *whorish* attempt."

Soon after the period he speaks of, a regular French theatre was established in London, where without doubt women acted². They had long before appeared on the Italian as well

¹ *Histriomastix*, p. 414. He there calls it only an *attempt*, but in a former page (215) he says, "they have now their female players in Italy and other foreign parts, as they had such French women actors in a play not long since personated in Blackfriars playhouse, to which there was great resort." In the margin he adds—"In Michaelmas terme, 1629." His account is confirmed by Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, in which I find the following notice of this exhibition:

"For the allowinge of a French company to playe a farle at Blackfriars, this 4 of November, 1629,—£. 2. 0. 0."

The same company attempted an exhibition both at the Red Bull and the Fortune theatres, as appears from the following entries:

"For allowinge of the Frenche [company] att the Red Bull for a daye, 22 Novemb. 1629,—[£. 2. 0. 0.]

"For allowinge of a Frenche companie att the Fortune to play one afternoone, this 14 of Decemb. 1629,—£. 1. 0. 0."

"I should have had another peece, but in respect of their ill fortune, I was content to bestow a peece back." *Ms. Herbert.*

Prynne, in conformity to the absurd notions which have been stated in the text, inserted in his Index these words: "*Women actors notorious rubores*:" by which he so highly offended the king and queen, that he was tried in the Star-chamber, and sentenced to be imprisoned for life, fined £. 5000, expelled Lincoln's Inn, disbarred and disqualified to practise the law, degraded of his degree in the university, to be set on the pillory, his ears cut off, and his book burnt by the hands of the common hangman, "which *rigorous* sentence," says Whitelocke, "was as rigorously executed." I quote these words as given by Dr. Burney from Whitelocke's Manuscript. It is remarkable that in his printed MEMORIALS the word *rigorous* is omitted; from which there is reason to believe that the editor in 1682 took some liberties with the manuscript from which that book was printed. The words there are, "—which sentence was as *severely* executed."

In p. 708 of Prynne's book is the following note, the insertion of which probably incensed their majesties, who often performed in the court-masques, not less than what has been already mentioned:

"It is infamous in this author's judgment [*Dion Cassius*] for emperors or persons of quality to *dance upon a stage*, or act a play."

² In the Office-book of Philip Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, I find a warrant for payment of £. 10. "to Josias Floridor for himselfe and the rest of the French players, for a tragedy by them acted before his

as the French stage. When Coryate was at Venice, [July 1608,] he tells us, he was at one of their playhouses, and saw a comedy acted. "The house (he adds) is very beggarly and base, in comparison of our stately playhouses in England; neither can their actors compare with us for apparel, shewes, and musicke. Here I observed certaine things that I never saw before; for I saw women act, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath been some times used in London; and they performed it with as good a grace, action

his Majestie in Dec. last." Dated Jan. 8. 1635-6. Their house had been licensed, April 18, 1635. I find also "£. 10. paid to John Navarro for himself and the rest of the company of *Spanish* players, for a play presented before his Majestie, Dec. 23, 1635."

We have already seen that Henrietta Maria had a precedent for introducing the comedians of her own country into England, King Henry the Seventh having likewise had a company of French players.

Sir Henry Herbert's manuscript furnishes us with the following notices on this subject:

"On tuesday night the 17 of February, 1634, [1634-5] a Frenche company of players, being aproved of by the queene at her house too nights before, and commended by her majesty to the kinge, were admitted to the Cockpitt in Whitehall, and there presented the king and queene with a Frenche comedy called *Melise*, with good approbation: for which play the king gives them ten pounds.

"This day being friday, and the 20 of the same monthe, the kinge tould mee his pleasure, and commanded mee to give order that this Frenche company should playe the too sermon daies in the weeke, during their time of playinge in Lent, and in the house of Drury-lane, where the queenes playes usually playe.

"The king's pleasure I signified to Mr. Beeston, [the Manager of Drury-lane theatre] the same day, who obeyd readily.

"The house-keepers are to give them by promise the benefit of their interest for the too days of the first weeke.

"They had the benefit of playinge on the sermon daies and gott two hundred pounds at least; besides many rich clothes were given them.

"They had freely to themselves the whole weeke before the weeke before Easter, which I obtaynd of the king for them.

"The 4 Aprill, on Easter monday, they playd the *Tramper* play, with better approbation than the other.

"On Wensday night the 16 Aprill, 1635, the French playd *Alcimede* with good aprobation.

In a marginal note Sir Henry Herbert adds, "The Frenche offered mee a present of £. 10; but I refused itt, and did them many other curtesys, *gratis*, to render the queene my mistress an acceptable service."

It appears from a subsequent passage, that in the following month a theatre was erected expressly for this troop of comedians.

"A warrant granted to Josias d'Aunay, Harfries de Lau, and others, for to act playes at a new house in Drury-lane, during pleasure, ye 5 may, 1635.

"The king was pleased to commande my Lord Chamberlain to direct

action, gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a player, as ever I saw any masculine actor ³."

The practice of men's performing the parts of women in the scene is of the highest antiquity. On the Grecian stage no woman certainly ever acted. From Plutarch's Life of Phocion, we learn, that in his time (about three hundred and eighteen years before the Christian era) the performance of a tragedy at Athens was interrupted for some time by one of the actors, who was to personate a *queen*, refusing to come on the stage, because, because he had not a suitable mask and dress, and a train of attendants richly habited; and Demosthenes in one of his orations ⁴, mentions Theodorus and Aristodemus as having often represented the Antigone of Sophocles ⁵. This fact is also ascertained by an anecdote pre-

served
 rect his warrant to Monsieur Le Fevre, to give him a power to contract with the Frenchmen for to builde a playhouse in his manage-house, which was done accordinglye by my advise and allowance."

"Thes Frenchmen," Sir Henry adds in the margin, "were commended unto mee by the queene, and have past through my handes, gratis."

They did not however pass quite free, from a subsequent entry it appears, that "they gave Blagrove [Sir Henry's deputy] three pounds for his paines."

In the following December the French pastoral of *Florimene* was acted at court by the young ladies who attended the queen from France.

"The pastorall of *Florimene*, (says Sir Henry) with the description of the scenes and interludes, as it was sent mee by Mr. Inigo Jones, I allowed for the press, this 14 of Decemb. 1635. The pastorall is in French, and 'tis the argument only, put into English, that I have allowed to be printed.

"Le pastorale de *Florimene* fust represente devant le roy et la royne, le prince Charles, et le prince Palatin, le 21 Decem. jour de St. Thomas, par les filles Francoise de la royne, et firent tres bien, dans la grande sale de Whitehall, aux depens de la royne." Ms. Herbert.

³ Coryate's *Cruities*, 4to. 1611, p. 247. I have found no ground for this writer's assertion, that female performers had appeared on the English stage before he wrote.

⁴ De fals. leg. tom. ii. p. 199, edit. Taylor.

⁵ See also Lucian, de Salt. II. 285, edit. Hemsterhusii. "Beeause," (says that lively writer) "at first you preferred tragedy and comedy and vagrant fidlers and singing to the harpe, before dancing, calling them truly exercises; and therefore commendable, let us, I pray, compare them severally with dancing. Where, if it please you, we will pass the pipe and harpe as parts and instruments of dancing, and consider tragedy as it is; first, according to its properties and dress. What a deformed and frightfull sight is it, to see a man raised to a prodigious length, stalking upon exalted bulkins, his face disguised with a grimme vizard, widely gaping, as if he meant to devour the spectators? I forbear to speake of his stuff breasts, and fore-bellyes, which make an adventitious and artificial corpulency, lest his unnatural length should carry disproportion to his slenderesse:

served by Aulus Gellius. A very celebrated actor, whose name was Polus, was appointed to perform the part of Electra in Sophocles's play; who in the progress of the drama appears with an urn in her hands, containing, as she supposes, the ashes of Orestes. The actor having some time before been deprived by death of a beloved son, to indulge his grief, as it should seem, procured the urn which contained the ashes of his child, to be brought from his tomb; which affected him so much, that when he appeared with it on the scene, he embraced it with unfeigned sorrow, and burst into tears⁶.

That on the Roman stage also female parts were represented by men in tragedy, is ascertained by one of Cicero's letters to Atticus, in which he speaks of Antipho⁶, who performed the part of Andromache; and by a passage in Horace, who informs us, that Fufius Phocæus being to perform the part of Ilione, the wife of Polymnestor, in a tragedy written either by Accius or Pacuvius, and being in the course of the play to be awakened out of sleep by the cries of the shade of Polydorus, got so drunk, that he fell into a real and profound sleep, from which no noise could rouse him⁷.

Horace

slenderesse: as also his clamour from within, when he breaks open and unlocks himself; when he howles iambicks, and most ridiculously sings his own sufferings, and renders himself by his very tone odious. For as for the rest, they are inventions of ancient poets. Yet as long as he personates only some *Andromache* and *Hecuba*, his singing is tolerable. But for a Hercules to enter dolefully singing, and to forget himself, and neither to regard his Lyons skinne, nor clubbe, must needs appear to any judging man a solecisme. And whereas you dislike that in dancing men should act women; this is a reprehension, which holds for tragedies and comedyes too, in which are more womens parts, then mens." *Dial. upon dancing*, translated by Jasper Mayne, folio, 1664.

⁶ Histrio in terra Græcia fuit fama celebri, qui gestus et vocis claritudine et venustate cæteris antestabat. Nomen fuisse aiunt Polum; unice amatum filium morte amisit. Eum luctum quum satis visus est eluxisse, rediit ad quæstum artis. In eo tempore Athenis Electram Sophocli acturus, gestare urnam quasi cum Orestis ossibus debebat. Ita compositum fabulæ argumentum est, ut veluti fratris reliquias ferens Electra compleret commiseraturque interitum ejus, qui per vim extinctus existimatur. Igitur Polus lugubri habitu Electræ indutus ossa atque urnam a sepulchro tulit filii, et quasi Orestis amplexus opplevit omnia non simulachris neque imitamentis, sed luctu atque lamentis veris et spirantibus. Itaque quum agi fabula videretur, dolor actus est." Aul. Gel. Lib. VII. c. 7.

Olivet in a note on one of Cicero's letters to Atticus, (l. iv. c. 15.) mentions a similar anecdote of a mime called *Scia*, for which he quotes the authority of Plutarch; but no such person is mentioned by that writer. *Scia*, according to Olivet, performed the part of Andromache. I suspect he meant to cite *Petrarch*. *Scia* probably represented Andromache in a tragick pantomime.

⁶ Epistol. ad Atticum, Lib. IV. c. 15.

⁷ "Non magis audivit quam Fufius ebrius olim,

Horace indeed mentions a female performer, called *Arbusecula*³; but as we find from his own authority that men personated women on the Roman stage, she probably was only an *emboliaria*, who performed in the interludes and dances exhibited between the acts and at the end of the play. *Servius*⁹ calls her *mima*, but that may mean nothing more than one who acted in the *mimes*, or danced in the pantomime dances^{*}; and this seems the more probable from the manner in which she is mentioned by *Cicero*, from whom we learn that the part of *Andromache* was performed by a male actor on that very day when *Arbusecula* exhibited with the highest applause¹.

The same practice prevailed in the time of the emperors; for in the list of parts which *Nero*, with a preposterous ambition, acted in the publick theatre, we find that of *Canace*, who was represented in labour on the stage².

In the interludes exhibited between the acts undoubtedly women appeared. The elder *Pliny* informs us that a female named *Luceia* acted in these interludes for an hundred years; and *Galeria Copiola* for above ninety years; having been first introduced on the scene in the fourteenth year of her age, in the year of Rome 672, when *Caius Marius* the younger and *Cneius Carbo* were consuls, and having performed in the 104th year of her age, six years before the death of *Augustus*, in the consulate of *C. Poppæus* and *Quintus Sulpicius*, A. U. C. 762³.

Eunuchs also sometimes represented women on the Roman stage, as they do at this day in Italy; for we find that *Sporus*, who made so conspicuous a figure in the time of *Nero*, being appointed in the year 70, [A. U. C. 823] to personate a nymph, who, in an interlude exhibited before *Vitellius*, was to be carried off by a ravisher, rather than endure the indignity of wearing a female dress on the stage, put himself to death⁴: a singular end for one, who about ten years before had

¹ Cum Ilionam edormit, Catienis mille ducentis.

² "Mater te appello, clamantibus." Sat. Lib. II. Sat. 3. Compare *Cicero*, *Tusculan*. I. 44.

³ "—satis est equitem mihi plaudere, ut andax."

"Contemptis aliis explosa *Arbusecula* dixit." Lib. I. Sat. 10.

⁹ In *Eclog.* x.

^{*} Sunt *Mimi*, ut ait *Claudianus*, qui lætia salibus facete risum movent; *Pantomimi* vero, ut idem ait, "nutu manibusque loquaces." *Vet. Schol.*

¹ *Epistol.* ad *Atticum*, l. iv. c. 15.

² *Sueton.* in *Nerone*, c. 21.

³ *Plin.* *Hist. Nat.* Lib. VIII. c. 48.

⁴ *Xiphilini Vitel.* p. 209, edit. H. Stephani, folio, 1592.

had been publicly espoused to Nero, in the hymeneal veil, and had been carried through one of the streets of Rome by the side of that monster, in the imperial robes of the empresses, ornamented with a profusion of jewels.

Thus ancient was the usage, which, though not adopted in the neighbouring countries of France and Italy, prevailed in England from the infancy of the stage. The prejudice against women appearing on the scene continued so strong, that till near the time of the Restoration boys constantly performed female characters; and, strange as it may now appear, the old practice was not deserted without many apologies for the *indecorum* of the novel usage. In 1659 or 1660, in imitation of the foreign theatres, women were first introduced on the scene. In 1656, indeed, Mrs. Coleman, the wife of Mr. Edward Coleman, represented *Jambe* in the First Part of D'Avenant's *Siege of Rhodes*; but the little she had to say was spoken in recitative. The first woman that appeared in any regular drama on a public stage, performed the part of Desdemona; but who the lady was, I am unable to ascertain. The play of *Othello* is enumerated by Downes as one of the stock-plays of the king's company on their opening their theatre in Drury-lane in April 1663; and it appears from a paper found with Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, and indorsed by him⁵, that it was one of the stock-plays of the same company from the time they began to play without a patent at the Red Bull in St. John-street. Mrs. Hughes performed the part of Desdemona in 1663, when the company removed to Drury-lane, and obtained the title of the king's servants; but whether she performed with them while they played at the Red Bull, or in Vere-street near Clare-market, has not been ascertained. Perhaps Mrs. Saunderson made her first essay there, though she afterwards was enlisted in D'Avenant's company. The received tradition is, that she was the first English actress⁶. The verses which were

spoken

⁵ See the list of plays belonging to the Red Bull, in a subsequent page, *ad ann.* 1660.

⁶ Mrs. Saunderson (afterwards Mrs. Betterton) played Juliet, Ophelia, and, I believe, Cordelia.

It should seem from the 22d line of the Epilogue spoken on the occasion, that the lady who performed Desdemona was an unmarried woman. Mrs. Hughes was married. The principal unmarried actress in the King's company appears to have been Mrs. Marshall, who is said to have been afterwards seduced under a pretence of marriage by Aubrey de Vere earl of Oxford, and who might have been the original female performer of Desdemona. At that time every unmarried woman bore the title of Mistress.

spoken by way of introducing a female to the audience, were written by Thomas Jordan, and being only found in a very scarce miscellany⁴, I shall here transcribe them :

“ *A Prologue, to introduce the first woman that came to act on the stage, in the tragedy called The Moor of Venice.*

“ I come, unknown to any of the rest,
 “ To tell you news; I saw the lady dress’d :
 “ The woman plays to day : mistake me not,
 “ No man in gown, or page in petticoat :
 “ A woman to my knowledge ; yet I can’t,
 “ If I should die, make affidavit on’t.
 “ Do you not twitter, gentleman ? I know
 “ You will be censuring : do it fairly though.
 “ ’Tis possible a virtuous woman may
 “ Abhor all sorts of looseness, and yet play ;
 “ Play on the stage,—where all eyes are upon her :—
 “ Shall we count that a crime, France counts an honour ?
 “ In other kingdoms husbands safely trust ’em ;
 “ The difference lies only in the custom.
 “ And let it be our custom, I advise ;
 “ I’m sure this custom’s better than th’ excise,
 “ And may procure us custom : hearts of flint
 “ Will melt in passion, when a woman’s in’t.

“ But gentlemen, you that as judges sit
 “ In the star-chamber of the house, the pit,
 “ Have modest thoughts of her ; pray, do not run
 “ To give her visits when the play is done,
 “ With ‘ damn me, your most humble servant, lady ;’
 “ She knows these things as well as you, it may be :
 “ Not a bit there, dear gallants, she doth know
 “ Her own deserts,—and your temptations too.—
 “ But to the point : — In this reforming age
 “ We have intents to civilize the stage.
 “ Our women are defective, and so fix’d,
 “ You’d think they were some of the guard disguis’d ;
 “ For

It is said in a book of no authority, (*Cur’s History of the Stage*), and has been repeated in various other compilations, that Mrs. Norris, the mother of the celebrated comedian known by the name of *Jubilee Dick*, was the first actress who appeared on the English stage ; but this is highly improbable. Mrs. Norris, who was in D’Avenant’s company, certainly had appeared in 1662, but she was probably not young ; for she played *Goody Fells* in *Town Shifts*, a comedy acted in 1671, and the *Nurse* in *Reformation*, acted in 1675.

⁴ *A Royal Arbour of Loyal Pasie*, by Thomas Jordan, no date, but printed, I believe, in 1662. Jordan was an actor as well as a poet.

" For, to speak truth, men act, that are between
 " Forty and fifty, wenches of fifteen;
 " With bone so large and nerve so incompilant,
 " When you call *DESDEMONA*, enter *GIANT*.—
 " We shall purge every thing that is unclean,
 " Lascivious, scurrilous, impious, or obscene;
 " And when we've put all things in this fair way,
 " *BAREBONES* himself may come to see a play.⁵

The Epilogue which consists of but twelve lines, is in the same strain of apology:

" And how do you like her? Come, what is't ye drive at?
 " She's the same thing in publick as in private;
 " As far from being what you call a whore,
 " As *Desdemona*, injur'd by the Moor:
 " Then he that censures her in such a case,
 " Hath a soul blacker than *Othello's* face.
 " But, ladies, what think *you*? for if you tax
 " Her freedom with dishonour to your sex,
 " She means to act no more, and this shall be
 " No other play but her own tragedy.
 " She will submit to none but your commands,
 " And take commission only from your hands."

From a paper in Sir Henry Herbert's handwriting I find that *Othello* was performed by the Red-Bull company, (afterwards his Majesties servants,) at their new theatre in Vere-street, near Clare-market, on Saturday December 8, 1660, for the first time that winter. On that day therefore it is probable an actress first appeared on the English stage. This theatre was opened on Thursday November 8, with the play of *K. Henry the Fourth*. Most of Jordan's prologues and epilogues appear to have been written for that company.

It is certain, however, that for some time after the Restoration men also acted female parts⁶; and Mr. Kynaston even

⁵ See also the Prologue to *The Second Part of the Siege of Rhodes*, acted in April, 1662,) which was spoken by a woman:

" Hope little from our poet's wither'd wit,
 " From infant players, scarce grown puppets yet;
 " Hope from our women less, whose bashful fear
 " Wonder'd to see me dare to enter here:
 " Each took her leave, and wish'd my danger past,
 " And though I come back safe and undisgrac'd,
 " Yet when they spy the wits here, then I doubt
 " No amazon can make them venture out;
 " Though I advis'd them not to fear you much,
 " For I presume not half of you are such."

⁶ In a prologue to a play represented before King Charles the Second

even after women had assumed their proper rank on the stage, was not only endured, but admired, if we may believe a contemporary writer; who assures us, "that being then very young, he made a complete stage beauty, performing his parts so well, (particularly *Artbiope* and *Aglaure*) that it has since been disputable among the judicious, whether any woman that succeeded him, touched the audience so sensibly as he?"

In D'Avenant's company, the first actresses that appeared was probably Mrs. Saunderson, who performed *Ianthe* in *The Siege of Rhodes* on the opening of his new theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, in April 1662⁸. It does not appear from Downes's account, that while D'Avenant's company performed at the Cockpit in Drury-lane during the years 1659, 1660 and 1661, they had any female performer among them: or that *Othello* was acted by them at that period.

In the infancy of the English stage it was customary in every piece to introduce a Clown, "by his mimick gestures to breed in the less capable mirth and laughter?" The privileges of the Clown were very extensive; for, between the acts, and sometimes between the scenes, he claimed a right to enter on the stage, and to excite merriment by any species of

very soon after his Restoration, of which I know not the title, are these lines, from which it appears that some young men acted the parts of women in that piece:

"—— we are sorry

" We should this night attend on so much glory

" With such weak worth; or your clear sight engage

" To view the remnants of a ruin'd stage:

" For doubting we should never play again,

" We have play'd all our women into men;

" That are of such large size for flesh and bones,

" They'll rather be taken for amazons

" Than tender maids; but your mercy doth please

" Daily to pass by as great faults as these:

" If this be pardon'd, we shall henceforth bring

" Better oblations to my lord the king."

A Royal Arbour, &c. p. 12.

The author of *Historia Histrionica* says, that Major Mohun played *Bellamante* in Shirley's *Love's Cruelty*, after the Restoration; and Cibber mentions, that Kynaston told him he had played the part of *Evadne* in *the Maid's Tragedy*, at the same period, with success. The apology made to King Charles the Second for a play not beginning in due time, ("that the queen was not shaved,") is well known. The queen is said (but on no good authority) to have been Kynaston.

⁷ *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 19.

⁸ In the following year she married Mr. Betterton, and not in 1670, as is erroneously asserted in the *Biographia Britannica*. She acted by the name of Mrs. Betterton in *The Slighted Maid*, in 1663.

⁹ Heywood's *Hist. of Women*, 1624.

of buffoonery that struck him. Like the Harlequin of the Italian Comedy, his wit was often extemporal, and he sometimes entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with some of the audience¹. He generally threw his thoughts into hobbling doggrel verses, which he made shorter or longer as he found convenient; but, however irregular his metre might be, or whatever the length of his verses, he always took care to tag them with words of corresponding sound: like Dryden's Doge,

"He fagotted his notions as they fell,

"And if they rhym'd and rattled, all was well."

Thomas Wilson and Richard Tarleton, both sworn servants to Queen Elizabeth, were the most popular performers of that time in this department of the drama, and are highly praised by the Continuator of Stowe's Annals, for "their wondrous, plentiful, pleasant, and *extemporal* wit"² Tarleton, whose comick powers were so great, that according to Sir Richard Baker, "he delighted the spectators before he had spoken

¹ In Brome's *Antipodes*, which was performed at the theatre in Salisbury-court, in 1638, a *by-play*, as he calls it, is represented in his comedy; a word for the application of which we are indebted to this writer, there being no other term in our language that I know of, which so properly expresses that species of interlude which we find in our poet's *Hamlet* and some other pieces. The actors in this *by-play* being called together by Lord Letoy, he gives them some instructions concerning their mode of acting, which prove that the clowns in Shakspeare's time frequently held a dialogue with the audience:

"Let. ——— Go be ready.—

"But you sir, are incorrigible, and

"Take licence to yourself to add unto

"Your parts your own free fancy; and sometimes

"To alter or diminish what the writer

"With care and skill compos'd, and when you are

"To speak to your co-actors in the scene,

"You hold interlocution with the audients.

"Bib. That is a way, my lord, hath been allow'd

"On elder stages, to move mirth and laughter.

"Let. Yes, in the days of Tarleton and Kempe,

"Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism,

"And brought to the perfection it now shines with.

"Then fools and jesters spent their wit, because

"The poets were wise enough to save their own

"For profitabler uses."

² Howes's edition of Stowe's *Chronicle*, 1631, p. 698.

See also Gabriel Harvey's *Four Letters*, 4to. 1592, p. 9; "Who in London hath not heard of—his fond disguising of a Master of Artes with ruffianly haire, unseemely apparell, and more unseemely company; his vaine glorious and Thraasonicall bravery; his piperly *entempering* and *Tarletonizing*?" &c.

spoken a word," is thus described in a very rare old pamphlet³:
 "The next, by his sute of russet, his buttoned cap, his taber, his standing on the toe, and other tricks, I knew to be either the body or resemblance of Tarlton, who living, for his pleasant conceits was of all men liked, and, dying, for mirth left not his like." In 1611 was published a book entitled his *Jests*, in which some specimens are given of the extempore wit which our ancestors thought so excellent. As he was performing some part "at the Bull in Bishops-gate-street, where the Queenes players oftentimes played," while he was "kneeling down to ask his fathers blessing," a fellow in the gallery threw an apple at him, which hit him on the cheek. He immediately took up the apple, and advancing to the audience, addressed them in these lines:

"Gentlemen, this fellow, with his face of mapple⁴,
 "Instead of a pippin hath throwne me an apple;
 "But as for an apple he hath cast a crab,
 "So instead of an honest woman God hath sent him a drab.

"The people," says the relater, "laughed heartily; for the fellow had a quean to his wife."

Another of these stories, which I shall give in the author's own words, establishes what I have already mentioned, that it was customary for the clown to talk to the audience or the actors *ad libitum*.

"At the Bull at Bishops-gate, was a play of *Henry the V.* [the performance which preceded Shakespeare's,] wherein
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³ *Kind-Hartes Dreame*, by Henry Chettle, 4to, no date, but published in Dec. 1592.

⁴ This appears to have been formerly a common sarcasm. There is a tradition yet preserved in Stratford, of Shakspeare's comparing the carbuncled face of a drunken blacksmith to a *mapple*. The blacksmith accosted him, as he was leaning over a mercer's door, with

"Now, Mr. SHAKSPEARE, tell me, if you can,

"The difference between a youth and a young man."
 to which our poet immediately replied,

"Thou son of fire, with *thy face like a mapple*,

"The same difference as between a scalded and a coddled apple."

This anecdote was related near fifty years ago to a gentleman at Stratford by a person then above eighty years of age, whose father might have been contemporary with Shakspeare. It is observable that a similar imagery may be traced in the *Comedy of Errors*:

"Though now this *grained face* of mine be hid," &c.

The bark of the maple is uncommonly rough, and the grain of one of the sorts of this tree (according to Evelyn) is "undulated and crisped into variety of curls."

the judge was to take a box on the eare; and because *he* was absent that should take the blow, Tarlton himselfe, ever forward to please, tooke upon him to play the same judge, besides his own part of the clowne; and Knel, then playing Henry the Fifth, hit Tarlton a sound box indeed, which made the people laugh the more, because it was he: but anon the judge goes in, and immediately Tarlton in his clownes cloaths comes out, and asks the actors, *What news?* O, faith one, had'st thou been here, thou should'st have seen Prince Henry hit the judge a terrible box on the eare. What, man, said Tarlton, strike a judge! It is true, i'faith, said the other. No other like, said Tarlton, and it could not be but terrible to the judge, when the report so terrifies me, that methinks the blowe remains still on my cheek, that it burnes again. The people laught at this mightily, and to this day I have heard it commended for rare; but no marvell, for he had many of these. But I would see *our clownes in these days* doe t'he like. No, I warrant ye; and yet they thinke well of themselves too."

The last words shew that this practice was not discontinued in the time of Shakspeare, and we here see that he had abundant reason for his precept in *Hamlet*: "Let those that play your clowns, *speak no more than is set down for them*; for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though *in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be consider'd.*"

This practice was undoubtedly coeval with the English stage; for we are told that Sir Thomas More, while he lived as a page with Archbishop Moreton, (about the year 1490,) as the Christmas plays were going on in the palace, would sometimes suddenly step upon the stage, "without studying for the matter," and exhibit a part of his own, which gave the audience much more entertainment than the whole performance besides⁵.

But the peculiar province of the Clown was to entertain the audience after the play was finished, at which time *themes* were sometimes given to him by some of the spectators, to descant upon⁶; but more commonly the audience were entertained

⁵ Roper's *Life and Death of More*, 8vo. 1716, p. 3.

⁶ "I remember I was once at a play in the country, where, as Tarlton's use was, the play being done, every one so pleased to *throw up his theme*: amongst all the rest one was read to this effect, word by word:

"Tarlton, I am one of thy friends, and none of thy foes,

"Then I pr'ythee tell how thou cam'st by thy flat nose," &c.

To this challenge Tarlton immediately replied in four lines of loose verse. *Tarlton's Jest*, 4to. 1611.

tained by a *jig*. A *jig* was a ludicrous metrical composition, often in rhyme, which was sung by the Clown, who likewise, I believe, occasionally danced, and was always accompanied by a tabor and pipe⁷. In these *jigs* more persons than one were some-

F 2

7 " Out upon them, [the players,] they spoile our trade,—they open our crosse-biting, our conny-catching, our traines, our traps, our gins, our snares, our subtilties; for no sooner have we a trick of deceit, but they make it common, *singing gigs*, and making jeasts of us, that every boy can point out our houses as they passe by."

Kind Hartes Dreame, Signat. E 3. b

See also *Pierre Penniless*, &c. 1592:

" ——— like the queint comedians of our time,

" That when the play is done, do fall to rhyme," &c.

So, in *A Strange Horse-race*, by Thomas Decker, 1613:

" Now as after the cleare stream hath glided away in his owne current, the bottom is muddy and troubled; and as I have often seen *after the finishing of some worthy tragedy or catastrophe* in the open theatres, that the scene, after the epilogue, hath been more black, about a nasty bawdy *jigge*, then the most horrid scene in the play was; the stinkards speaking all things, yet no man understanding any thing; a mutiny being amongst them, yet none in danger; no tumult, and yet no quietness; no mischief begotten, and yet mischief borne; the swiftness of such a torrent, the more it over-whelms, breeding the more pleasure; so after these worthies and conquerors had left the field, another race was ready to begin, at which, though the persons in it were nothing equal to the former, yet the shoutes and noyse at these was as great, if not greater."

The following lines in Hall's *Satires*, 1597, seem also to allude to the same custom:

" One higher pitch'd, doth set his soaring thought

" On crowned kings, that fortune hath low brought,

" Or some upreared high-aspiring swaine,

" As it might be, the Turkish *Tamburlaine*.

" Then weeneth he his base drink-drowned spright

" Rapt to the three-fold loft of heaven hight,

" When he conceives upon his fained stage

" The stalking steps of his great personage;

" Graced with huff-cap termes and thund'ring threats,

" That his poor hearers' hayre quite upright sets.

" Such soone as some brave-minded hungrie youth

" Sees fitly frame to his wide-strained mouth,

" He vaunts his voyce upon an hyred stage,

" With high-set steps, and princely carriage:—

" There if he can with termes Italianate,

" Big founding sentences, and words of state,

" Faire patch me up his pure iambick verse,

" He ravishes the gazing scaffolders.—

" Now least such frightful shoves of fortunes fall,

" And bloody tyrants' rage, should chance appall

" The dead-struck audience, *midst the silent rout*

" Comes leaping in a *selfe-misformed lout*,

" And laughs, and grins, and frames his mimick face,

" And justles straight into the princes place:

" Then

introduced. The original of the entertainment which this buffoon afforded our ancestors between the acts and after the play, may be traced to the satirical interludes of Greece¹, and the Atellans and Mimes of the Roman stage². The

Exodiarum

"Then doth the theatre echo all aloud

"With gladsome noise of that applauding crowd.

"A goodly boob-pob, when vile rustlings

"Are matcht with monarchs and with mightie kings!" &c.

The entertainments here alluded to were probably "the fond and frivolous jestures," described in the preface to Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590, which the printer says, he omitted, "as farre unmeet for the matter, though they have been of some vaine conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were shewed upon the stage in their graced deformities."

It should seem from D'Avenant's prologue to *The Wits*, when acted at the Duke's theatre, in 1662, that this species of entertainment was not even then entirely disused:

"So country jigs and farces, mixt among

"Heroick scenes, make plays continue long."

Blount in his *Glossographia*, 1681, 5th edit. defines a farce, "A fond and dissolute play or comedy. Also the jig at the end of an interlude, wherein some pretty knavery is acted."

Kempe's *Jigg of the Kitchen-stuffe-woman*, and Philips his *Jigg of the Slyppers*, were entered on the Stationers' books in 1595; but I know not whether they were printed. There is, I believe, no jig now extant in print.

"Carmine qui tragico vilem certavit ob hircum,

"Mox etiam agrestes Satyros nudavit, et asper

"Incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit, eo quod

"Illecebris erat et gratâ novitate morandus

"Spectator, sanctusque sacris, et potus et exlex."

Hox. de Arte Poetica.

"Urbicus exodio risum movet Atellanae

"Gestibus Autonoes;—." Juv. Sat. VI. 71.

"*Exodiarum* in fine ludorum apud veteres intrabat, quod ridiculus foret; ut quicquid lacrymarum atque tristitiæ coegissent ex tragicis affectibus, hujus spectaculi risus detergeret." *Vet. Schol.* "As an old commentator on Juvenal affirms, the *Exodiarum*, which were singers and dancers, entered to entertain the people with light songs and mimical gestures, that they might not go away oppressed with melancholy from these sacred pieces of the theatre." Dryden's *Dedication* to his Translation of Juvenal. See also Liv. lib. vii. c. 2. Others contend that the *Exodia* did not solely signify the songs, &c. at the conclusion of the play, but those also which were sung in the middle of the piece; and that they were so called, because they were introduced *ἐξ ὁδοῦ*, that is, incidentally, and unconnected with the principal entertainment. Of this kind undoubtedly were the *ἐμὲλα* or episodes, introduced between the acts, as the *νῦν* were the songs sung at the opening of the play.

The Atellan interludes were so called from Atella, a town in Italy, from which they were introduced to Rome: and in process of time they were acted sometimes in the middle, and sometimes at the end, of more serious

Exodiarii and *Emboliaria* of the Mimes are undoubtedly the remote progenitors of the Vice and Clown of our ancient dramas¹.

No

serious pieces. These, as we learn from one of Cicero's letters, gave way about the time of Julius Cæsar's death to the *Mimes*, which consisted of a grosser and more licentious pleasantry than the Atellan interludes. "Nunc venio," says Cicero, "ad jocationes tuas, cum tu secundum Oenomaum Accii, non ut olim solebat, Atellanum, sed ut nunc fit, mimum introduxisti." *Epist. ad Fam.* IX. 16. The Atellan interludes, however, were not wholly disused after the introduction of the Mimes; as is ascertained by a passage in Suetonius's Life of Nero, c. 39.

"Mirum et vel præcipue notabile inter hæc fuit, nihil eum patientius quam maledicta et convitia hominum tulisse; neque in ullos leniorem quam qui se dictis ante aut carminibus laceffissent, exitisse.—Transfugentem eum Isidorus Cynicus in publico clara voce corripuerat, quod Nauplii mala bene cantitaret, sua bona male disponderet. Et Datus Atellanarum histrio, in cantico quodam, *ὕψαινε πάτερ, ὕψαινε μήτηρ*, ita demonstraverat, ut bibentem natantemque faceret, exitum scilicet Claudii Agrippinæque significans; et in novissima clausula, *Orcus vobis ducit pedes*, senatum gestu notaret. Histriionem et philosophum Nero nihil amplius quam urbe Italiaque submovit, vel contemptu omnis infamiae, vel ne fatendo dolorem irritaret ingenia." See also Galb. c. 13.

I do not find that the ancient French theatre had any exhibition exactly corresponding with this, for their *SOTTIE* rather resembled the Atellan farces, in their original state, when they were performed as a distinct exhibition, unmixed with any other interlude. An extract given by Mr. Warton from an old *ART OF POETRY* published in 1548, furnishes us with this account of it: "The French farce contains nothing of the Latin comedy. It has neither acts nor scenes, which would serve only to introduce a tedious prolixity: for the true subject of the French farce or *SOTTIE* is every sort of foolery, which has a tendency to provoke laughter.—The subject of the Greek and Latin comedy was totally different from every thing on the French stage; for it had more morality than drollery, and often as much truth as fiction. Our *MORALITIES* hold a place indifferently between tragedy and comedy, but our farces are really what the Romans called *Mimes* or *Priapees*, the intended end and effect of which was excessive laughter, and on that account they admitted all kind of licentiousness, as our farces do at present. In the mean time their pleasantry does not derive much advantage from rhymes, however flowing, of eight syllables." *HIST. OF ENG. POETRY*, Vol. III. p. 350. Scaliger expressly mentions the two species of drama above described, as the popular entertainments of France in his time. "Sunt igitur duo genera, quæ etiam vicatim et oppidatim per universam Galliam mirificis artificibus circumferuntur; *MORALE*, et *RIPICULUM*." *Poetices lib. I. c. x. p. 17*, edit. 1561.

¹ The exact conformity between our Clowns and the *Exodiarii* and *Emboliaria* of the Roman stage is ascertained, not only by what I have stated in the text, but by our author's contemporary Philemon Holland, by whom that passage in Pliny which is referred to in a former page,—"*Luceia mima centum annis in scena pronuntiavit. Galeria Copiola, emboliaria, reducta est in scenam,—annum centessimum quartum agens,*"

—12

No writer that I have met with, intimates that in the time of Shakspeare it was customary to exhibit more than a single dramattick piece on one day². Had any shorter pieces, of the same kind with our modern farces, (beside the *jigs* already mentioned,) been presented after the principal performance, some of them probably would have been printed; but there are none extant of an earlier date than the time of the Restoration³. The practice therefore of exhibiting two dramas successively in the same afternoon, we may be assured, was not established before that period. But though our ancient audiences were not gratified by the representation of more than one drama in the same day, the entertainment in the middle of the reign of Elizabeth was diversified, and the populace diverted, by vaulting, tumbling, slight of hand, and morrice-dancing⁴; and in the time of Shakspeare, by the extemporaneous buffoonery of the Clown, whenever he chose to solicit the attention of the audience; by singing and dancing between the acts, and either a song or the metrical jig already described at the end of the piece⁵; a mixture not
more

—is thus translated: “*Luceia, a common Vice in a play, followed the stage, and acted thereupon 100 yeeres. Such another Vice, that plaid the foole, and made sport betwene whiles in interludes, named Galeria Copiola, was brought to act on the stage,—when she was in the 104th yeere of her age.*”

² *The Yorkshire Tragedy, or All's One*, indeed, appears to have been one of four pieces that were represented on the same day; and Fletcher has also a piece called *Four Plays in One*; but probably these were either exhibited on some particular occasion, or were ineffectual efforts to introduce a new species of amusement; for we do not find any other instances of the same kind.

³ In 1663, as I learn from Sir Henry Herbert's Mss. Sir William D'Avenant produced *The Playhouse to be let*. The fifth act of this heterogeneous piece is a mock tragedy, founded on the actions of Cæsar, Anthony, and Cleopatra. This, Langbaine says, used to be acted at the theatre in Dorset Garden, (which was not opened till November 1671,) after the tragedy, of *Pompey*, written by Mrs. Catharine Phillips: and was, I believe, the first farce that appeared on the English stage. In 1677, *The Cheats of Scapin* was performed, as a second piece, after *Titus and Berenice*, a play of three acts, in order to furnish out an exhibition of the usual length: and about the same time farces were produced by Duffet, Tate, and others.

⁴ “For the eye, besides the beautie of the houses and the stages, he [the devil] sendeth in garish apparell, masques, vaulting, tumbling, dancing of giggers, galiardes, morrices, bobby-horses, shewing of juggling castles,—nothing forgot, that might serve to set out the matter with pompe, or ravish the beholders with variety of pleasure.” *Player Confuted in five actions*. By Stephen Goston. Signat. E.

⁵ See Beaumont's Verses to Fletcher on his *Faithful Shepberdesse*:

“Nor

more heterogeneous than that with which we are now only presented, a tragedy and a farce. In the dances, I believe, not only men, but boys in women's dresses, were introduced: a practice which prevailed on the Grecian stage⁶, and in France till late in the last century⁷.

The amusements of our ancestors, before the commencement of the play, were of various kinds. While some part of the audience entertained themselves with reading⁸, or playing

"Nor want there those, who, as the boy does dance

"Between the acts, will censure the whole play."

So also, in Sir John Davies's *EPIGRAMS*, no date, but printed in 1598:

"For as we see at all the play-house doores,

"When ended is the play, the dance, and song,

"A thousand townsmen," &c.

Hentzner observes, that the dances when he was in London in 1598, were accompanied with exquisite musick. See the passage quoted from his *ITINERARY*, in p. 38, n. 1.

That in the stage-dances boys in the dress of women sometimes joined, appears to me probable from Prynne's invective against the theatre: "Stage-plays," says he, "by our own modern experience are commonly attended with *mixt effeminate amorous dancing*." *Histriomastix*, p. 259. From the same author we learn that songs were frequently sung between the acts. "By our owne moderne experience there is nothing more frequent in all our stage-plays then amorous pastoral or obscene lascivious love-songs, most melodiously chanted out upon the stage betweene each severall action; both to supply that chafme or vacant interim which the tiring-house takes up in changing the actors' robes to fit them for some other part in the ensuing scene,—as likewise to please the itching eares, if not to inflame the outrageous lusts, of lewde spectators." *Ibidem*, p. 262.

In another place the author quotes the following passage from Eusebius. "What seeth he who runnes to play-houses? Diabolical songs, dancing wenches, or, that I may speake more truly, girls tossed up and downe with the furies of the devil," [*A good description (adds Prynne) of our dancing females.*] "For what doth this dancereffe? She most impudently uncovers her head, which Paul hath commanded to be always covered; she turnes about her necke the wrong way; she throweth about her haire hither and thither. Even these things verily are done by her whom the Devill hath possessed." *Ibidem*, p. 534.

It does not appear whether the puritanical writer of this treatise alludes in the observation inserted in crotchets to boys dancing on the stage in women's cloaths, or to female dancers in *private* houses. The subject immediately before him should rather lead to the former interpretation. *Women* certainly did not dance on the stage in his time:

⁶ See p. 89, n. 5.

⁷ "Dans le ballet de *Triomphe de l'Amour* en 1681, on vit pour la premiere fois de danseuses sur le theatre de l'Opera: auparavant c'etoient deux, quatre, six, ou huit danseurs qu'on habilloit en femmes." *Oeuvres de M. De Saint-Foix*, tom. iii. p. 416.

⁸ So, in Fitz-Jeffery's *Satires*, 1617:

"Ye

playing at cards⁹, others were employed in less refined occupations; in drinking ale¹, or smoking tobacco²: with these and nuts and apples they were furnished by male attendants, of whose clamour a satirical writer of the time of James I. loudly complains³. In 1633 when Prynne published his *Histrionastix*, women smoked tobacco in the playhouses, as well as men⁴.

It was a common practice to carry table-books⁵ to the theatre, and either from curiosity, or enmity to the author,

or

"Ye worthy worthies! none else, might I chuse,

"Doe I desire my poesie peruse,

"For to save charges ere the play begin,

"Or when the lord of liberty comes in."

Again, in a satire at the conclusion of *The Mafive, or young Whelp of the old Dogge*,—*Epigrams and Satires*, printed by Thomas Creede:

[The author is speaking of those who will probably purchase his book.]

"Last comes my scoffing friend, of scowring wit,

"Who thinks his judgment 'bove all arts doth sit.

"He buys the booke, and hastes him to the play;

"Where when he comes and reads, "here's stuff," doth say:

"Because the lookers on may hold him wise,

"He laughs at what he likes, and then will rise,

"And takes tobacco; then about will looke,

"And more dislike the play than of the booke;

"At length is vext he should with charge be drawne

"For such slight fights to lay a sute to pawne."

⁹ Before the play begins, fall to cardes." *Guls Horne-book*, 1609.

¹ See *The Woman Hater*, a comedy, by B. and Fletcher, 1607:

"There is no poet acquainted with more shakings and quakings towards the latter end of his new play, when he's in that case that he stands peeping between the curtains, so fearfully, that a bottle of ale cannot be opened, but he thinks some body hisses."

² "Now, sir, I am one of your gentle auditors that am come in;—I have my three forts of tobacco in my pocket; my light by me;—and thus I begin." Induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, by Ben Jonson, 1601.

So, in *Bartolomew Fair*, 1614: "He looks like a fellow that I have seen accommodate gentlemen with tobacco at our theatres."

Again, in Decker's *Guls Horne-book*: "By sitting on the stage, you may with small cost purchase the deare acquaintance of the boyes; have a good stool for sixpence;—get your match lighted," &c.

³ "—Pr'ythee, what's the play?

"—I'll see't, and sit it out whate'er.—

"Had Fate fore-read me in a crowd to die;

"To be made adder-deaf with pippin-cry."

Notes from Black-fryers, by H. Fitz-Jeffery, 1617.

⁴ In a note on a passage in Goffson's *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, "Instead of pomegranates they give them pippins," &c. quoted by Prynne, he informs us, "Now they offer them [the female part of the audience] the *toba-co-pipe*, which was then unknowne." *Histrionastix*, p. 363.

⁵ See the induction to Marston's *Malecontent*, a comedy, 1604: "I

am

or some other motive, to write down passages of the play that was represented; and there is reason to believe that the imperfect and mutilated copies of one or two of Shakspeare's dramas, which are yet extant, were taken down by the ear or in short-hand during the exhibition.

At the end of the piece, the actors, in noblemen's houses and in taverns, where plays were frequently performed⁶, prayed for the health and prosperity of their patrons; and in the publick theatres, for the king and queen⁷. This prayer sometimes made part of the epilogue⁸. Hence, probably, as Mr. Steevens has observed, the addition of *Vivant rex et regina*, to the modern play-bills.

Plays in the time of our author, began at one o'clock in the afternoon⁹; and the exhibition was sometimes finished in

F 5

two

an one that hath seen this play often, and can give them [Heminge, Burbage, &c.] intelligence for their action; I have most of the jests here in my *table-book*."

So, in the prologue to *Hannibal and Scipio*, 1637:

"—Nor shall he in plush,

"That, from the poet's labours, in the pit

"Informs himself, for the exercise of his wit

"At taverns, gather notes."—

Again, in the prologue to *The Woman-Hater*, a comedy, 1607:

"If there be any lurking among you in corners, with *table-books*, who have some hopes to find fit matter to feed his malice on, let them clasp them up, and flink away, or stay and be converted."

Again in *Every man in his Humour*, 1601:

"But to such, wherever they sit concealed, let them know, the author defies them and their *writing-tables*."

⁶ See *A Mad World, my Masters*, a comedy, by Middleton, 1608:

"Some sherry for my lord's players there, firrah; why this will be a true feast;—a right *Mitre* supper;—a *play* and all."

The night before the insurrection of the gallant and unfortunate earl of Essex, the play of *King Henry IV.* (not Shakspeare's piece) was acted at his house.

⁷ See the notes on the epilogue to *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* Vol. VIII.

⁸ See *Cambyfes*, a tragedy, by Thomas Preston; *Loocrine*, 1595; and *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

⁹ "Fuscus doth rise at ten, and at eleven

"He goes to Gyls, where he doth eat till one,

"Then sees a play.—

Epigrams by Sir John Davies, no date, but printed about 1598.

Others, however, were actuated by a stronger curiosity, and, in order to secure good places, went to the theatre, without their dinner. See the prologue to *The Unfortunate Lovers*, by Sir William D'Avenant, first performed at Blackfriars in April, 1638:

"—You are grown excessive proud,

"Since ten times more of wit than was allow'd

"Your

two hours¹. Even in 1667, they commenced at three o'clock². About thirty years afterwards, (in 1696,) theatrical entertainments began an hour later³.

We have seen that in the infancy of our stage Mysteries were usually acted in churches; and the practice of exhibiting religious dramas in buildings appropriated to the service of religion on the Lord's-day certainly continued after the Reformation.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth plays were exhibited in the publick theatres on Sundays, as well as on other days of the

" Your silly ancestors in twenty year,
 " You think in *two short hours* to swallow here.
 " For they to theatres were pleas'd to come,
 " Ere they had din'd, to take up the best room;
 " There sat on benches not adorn'd with mats,
 " And graciously did vail their high-crown'd hats
 " To every half-dress'd player, as he still
 " Through hangings peep'd, to see the galleries fill.
 " Good easy-judging souls, with what delight
 " They would expect a jig or target-fight!
 " A furious tale of Troy, which they ne'er thought
 " Was weakly writ, if it were strongly fought;
 " Laugh'd at a clinch, the shadow of a jest,
 " And cry'd—*a passing good one, I protest.*"

From the foregoing lines it appears that, anciently, places were not taken in the best rooms or boxes, before the representation. Soon after the Restoration, this practice was established. See a prologue to a revived play, in *Covent Garden Drollery*, 1672:

" Hence 'tis, that at *new* plays you come so soon,
 " Like bridegrooms hot to go to bed ere noon;
 " Or if you are detain'd some little space,
 " *The stinking footman's sent to keep your place.*
 " But if a play's *reviv'd*, you stay and dine,
 " And drink till *three*, and then come dropping in."

Though Sir John Davies, in the passage above quoted, mentions *one o'clock* as the hour at which plays commenced, the time of beginning the entertainment about eleven years afterwards (1609) seems to have been later; for Decker in his *Guls Horne-booke* makes his gallant go to the ordinary at *two o'clock*, and from thence to the play.

When Ben Jonson's *Magnetick Lady* was acted, (in 1632,) plays appear to have been over at five o'clock. They probably at that time did not begin till between two and three o'clock.

¹ See p. 105, n. 9. See also the prologue to *King Henry VIII.* and that to *Romeo and Juliet.*

² See *The Demoiselles a la Mode*, by Fleckno, 1667:

1. *Actor.* " Hark you, hark you, whither away so fast?

2. *Actor.* " Why, to the theatre, 'tis past *three o'clock*, and the play is ready to begin." See also note 9, above.

After the Restoration, (we are told by old Mr. Cibber) it was a frequent practice of the ladies of quality, to carry Mr. Kynaston the actor, in his female dress, after the play, in their coaches to Hyde Park.

³ See the Epilogue to *The Sbe Gallants*, printed in that year.

the week⁴. The licence granted by that queen to James Burbage in 1574, which has been already printed in a former page⁵, shews that they were then represented on that day, *out of the hours of prayer*.

We are told indeed by John Field in his *Declaration of God's Judgment at Paris Garden*, that in the year 1580 "the magistrates of the city of London obtained from Queene Elizabeth, that all heathenish playes and enterludes should be banished upon sabbath dayes." This prohibition, however, probably lasted but a short time; for her majesty, when she visited Oxford in 1592, did not scruple to be present at a theatrical exhibition on Sunday night, the 24th of September in that year⁶. During the reign of James the First, though dramattick entertainments were performed at court on Sundays⁷, I believe, no plays were *publickly* represented on that

⁴ "These, [the players] because they are allowed to play every Sunday, make four or five Sundays; at least, every week." *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579.

"In former times, (says Strype in his Additions to Stowe's *Survey of London*,) ingenious tradesmen and gentlemen's servants would sometimes gather a company of themselves, and learn interludes, to expose vice, or to represent the noble actions of our ancestors. These they played at festivals, in private houses, at weddings, or other entertainments. But in process of time it became an occupation, and these plays being commonly acted on Sundays and other festivals, the churches were forsaken, and the playhouses thronged."

See also *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse on St. Bartholomew day, being the 24. of August, 1578, By John Stockwood*:—"Will not a fylthie playe with the blait of a trumpette sooner call thyther [to the country] a thousande, than an houres tolling of a bell bring to the sermon a hundred? Nay, even heere in the citie, without it be at this place, and some other certaine ordinarie audience, where shall you find a reasonable company? Whereas if you resort to the Theatre, the Curtaine, and other places of playes in the citie, you shall on the Lord's day have these places, with many other that I can reckon, so full as possible they can throng."

See also Stubbes's *Anatomic of Abuses*, 1583, in pref.; and *The Mirror of Magistrates for Cities*, 1584, p. 24.

⁵ P. 31.

⁶ Peck's *Memoirs of Cromwell*, No. IV. p. 15.

⁷ This is ascertained by the following account of "REVILLS and PLAYES performed and acted at Christmas in the court at Whitehall, 1622;" for the preservation of which we are indebted to Sir John Aspley, then Master of the Revels:

"Upon St. Steevens daye at night *The Spanish Curate* was acted by the kings players.

"Upon St. Johns daye at night was acted *The Beggars Bush* by the kings players.

"Upon Childermas daye no playe.

"Upon the Sunday following *The Pilgrim* was acted by the kings players.

that day^s; and by the statute 3 Car. I. c. i. their exhibition on the Sabbath day was absolutely prohibited: yet, notwithstanding this act of parliament, both plays and masques were performed at court on Sundays, during the first sixteen years of the reign of that king^o, and certainly in private houses, if not on the publick stage.

It

" Upon New-years day at night *The Alchemist* was acted by the kings players.

" Upon Twelſe night, the Masque being put off, the play called *A Vow and a good one* was acted by the princes servants.

" Upon Sunday, being the 19th of January, the Princes Masque appointed for Twelſe daye, was performed. The speeches and songs composed by Mr. Ben. Johnson, and the scene made by Mr. Inigo Jones, which was three times changed during the tyme of the masque: where in the first that was discovered was a prospective of Whitehall, with the Banqueting House; the second was the Masquers in a cloud; and the third a Forrest. The French embassador was present.

" The Antemasques of tumblers and jugglers.

" The Prince did leade the measures with the French embassadors wife.

" The measures, braules, corrantos, and galliards, being ended, the Masquers with the ladyes did daunce 2 contrey daunces, namely *The Soldiers Marche*, and *Huff Hamukin*, where the French Embassadors wife and Mademoysala St. Luke did [daunce].

" At Candlemas *Mutvolio* was acted at court, by the kings servants.

" At Shrovetide, the king being at Newmarket, and the prince out of England, there was neyther masque nor play, nor any other kind of Revells held at court." Mr. Herbert.

^s In the *Refutation of the Apologie for Actors*, by J. G. quarto, 1615, it is asked, If plays do so much good, why are they not suffered on the Sabbath, a day select whereon to do good?" From hence it appears that plays were not permitted to be publickly acted on Sundays in the time of James I.

Yet Beard in his *Theatre of God's Judgment*, p. 212, edit. 1631, tells us, that in the year 1607, at a towne in Bedfordshire called Risley, the floore of a chamber wherein many were gathered together to see a stage-play on the Sabbath day, fell downe." But this was a private exhibition.

-From a passage also in Prynne's *Histriomastix*, p. 243, it appears that plays had been sometimes represented on Sundays in the time of James the First, though the practice was then not common. "Dancing therefore on the Lord's day is an unlawful pastime punishable by the statute 1 Caroli, c. 1. which intended to suppress dancing on the lords day, as well as beare-bayting, bull-bayting, *enterludes and common playes*, which were not so rife, so common, as dancing, when this law was first enacted."

It is uncertain whether this writer here alludes to publick or private exhibitions.

² May, in his *History of the Parliament of England*, 1646, taking a review of the conduct of king Charles and his ministers from 1618 to 1640, mentions that plays were usually represented at court on Sundays during that period.

There

It has been a question, whether it was formerly a common practice to ride on horseback to the playhouse; a circumstance that would scarcely deserve consideration, if it were not in some sort connected with our author's history¹, a plausible story having been built on this foundation, relative to his first introduction to the stage.

The modes of conveyance to the theatre, anciently, as at present, seem to have been various; some going in coaches², others

There were during this period similar exhibitions on Sundays elsewhere as well as at court, notwithstanding the statute made in the beginning of this reign: but whether they were permitted then in the publick theatres, I am unable to ascertain. Prynne in his *Histriomastix*, p. 645, has the following passage: "Neither will it hereupon follow, that we may dance, dice, see masques or playes on *Lords-day nights*, (as too many do,) because the Lords day is then ended," &c. and in p. 717, he insinuates that the statute 3 Car. 1. c. 4. (which prohibited the exhibition of any interlude or stage-play on the Lord's-day,) was not very strictly enforced: "If it were as diligently executed as it was piously enacted, it would suppress many great abuses, *that are yet continuing among us*, to Gods dishonour and good christians' grief in too many places of our kingdom; which our justices, our inferior magistrates, might soon reforme, would they but set themselves seriously about it, as some here and there have done."

See also Withers's *Britaines Remembrancer*, Canto VI. p. 197, b. edit. 1628:

"And seldom have they leisure for a play

"Or masque, except upon God's holiday."

In John Spencer's *Discourses of diverse petitions*, &c. 4to. 1641, (as I learn from Oldys's Manuscript notes on Langbaine,) it is said, that "John Wilson, a cunning musician, contrived a curious comedy, which being acted on a Sunday night after that John bishop of Lincoln had consecrated the earl of Cleaveland's sumptuous chapel, the said John Spencer (newly made the bishop's commissary general) did present the said bishop at Huntingdon for suffering the said comedy to be acted in his house on a Sunday, though it was nine o'clock at night; also Sir Sydney Montacute and his lady, Sir Thomas Hadley and his lady, Master Wilson, and others, actors of the same: and because they did not appear, he sentenced the bishop to build a school at Eaton, and endow it with 20l. a year for a master; Sir Sydney Montacute to give five pounds and five coats to five poor women, and his lady five pounds and five gowns to five poor widows; and the censure, (says he) stands yet unrepealed."

¹ See Vol. I. Part I. p. 129.

² "A pipe there, firrah; no sophisticate;

"Villaine, the best,—whate'er you prize it at.

"Tell yonder lady with the yellow fan,

"I shall be proud to usher her anon;

"My coach stands ready."——

Notes from Black-fryers, 1617.

The author is describing the behaviour of a gallant at the *Blackfriars theatre*.

others on horseback³, and many by water⁴. To the *Globe* playhouse

³ See the induction to *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601: "Besides, they could wish, your poets would leave to be promoters of other men's jests, and to way-lay all the stale apothegms or old books they can hear of, in print or otherwise, to farce their scenes withal:—again, that feeding their friends with nothing of their own but what they have twice or thrice cook'd, they should not wantonly give out, how soon they had dress'd it, nor how many *coaches* came to carry away the broken meat, besides *bobby-horses*, and *foot-cloth nags*."

"By this time," (says Decker, describing an ordinary,) "the parings of fruit and cheese are in the voyder, cardes and dice lie stinking in the fire, the guests are all up, the guilt rapiers ready to be hanged, the French lacquey and Irish footboy shrugging at the doores, *with their masters' bobby-horses, to ride to the new play*; that's the rendezvous, thither they are gallopt in post; let us take a paire of oares and row lustily after them." *Guls Hornebooke*, 4to. 1609.

⁴ In the year 1613, the Company of Watermen petitioned his majesty, "that the players might not be permitted to have a playhouse in London or in Middlesex, within four miles of the city on that side of the Thames." From Taylor's *True Cause of the Watermen's Suit concerning Players, and the reasons that their playing on London side, is their* [i. e. the Watermen's] *extreme hindrance*, we learn, that the theatres on the Bankside in Southwark were once so numerous, and the custom of going thither by water so general, that many thousand watermen were supported by it.—As the book is not common, and the passage contains some anecdotes relative to the stage at that time, I shall transcribe it:

"Afterwards," [i. e. as I conjecture, about the year 1596.] says Taylor, who was employed as an advocate in behalf of the watermen, "the players began to play on the *Bankside*, and to leave playing in London and Middlesex, *for the most part*. Then there went such great concourse of people by water, that the small number of watermen remaining at home [the majority being employed in the Spanish war] were not able to carry them, by reason of the court, the tearms, the players, and other employments. So that we were inforced and encouraged, hoping that this golden stirring world would have lasted ever, to take and entertaine men and boyes, which boyes are grown men, and keepers of houses; so that the number of watermen, and those that live and are maintained by them, and by the only labour of the oare and the scull, betwixt the bridge of Windsor and Gravesend, cannot be fewer than *forty thousand*; the cause of the greater halfe of which multitude hath bene the players playing on the *Bankside*; for I have known three companies, besides the bear-baiting, at once there; to wit, the *Globe*, the *Rose*, and the *Swan*."

"And now it hath pleased God in this peaceful time, [from 1604 to 1613.] that there is no employment at the sea, as it hath bene accustomed, so that all those great numbers of men remains at home; and the players have all (except the kings men) left their usual residency on the *Bankside*, and doe play in Middlesex, far remote from the Thames; so that every day in the weeke they do draw unto them three or four thousand people, that were used to spend their monies by water.—

"His majesties players did exhibit a petition against us, in which they said, that our suit was unreasonable, and that we might as justly remove the

playhouse the company probably were conveyed by water⁵; to that in *Blackfriars*, the gentry went either in coaches⁶, or on horseback; and the common people on foot⁷.

Plays

the Exchange, the walks in Pauls, or Moorfields, to the Bankside, for our profits, as to confine them."

The affair appears never to have been decided. "Some (says Taylor) have reported that I took bribes of the players, to let the suit fall, and to that purpose I had a supper of them, at *the Cardinal's bat*, on the Bankside." *Works of Taylor the water-poet*, p. 171, edit. 1633.

⁵ See an epilogue to a vacation-play at *the Globe*, by Sir William D'Avenant; *Works*, p. 245:

"For your own sakes, poor souls, you had not best
 "Believe my fury was so much suppress'd
 "I' the heat of the last scene, as now you may
 "Boldly and safely too cry down our play;
 "For if you dare but murmur one false note,
 "Here in the house, or going to take boat;
 "By heaven I'll mow you off with my long sword,
 "Yeoman and squire, knight, lady, and her lord."

So in the *Gull Hornet*, 1609: "If you can either for love or money, provide your selfe a lodging by the water-side;—it adds a kind of state to you to be carried from thence to the *stairs of your playhouse*."

⁶ See a letter from Mr. Garrard to Lord Strafford, dated Jan. 9, 1633-4; Strafford's *Letters*, Vol. I. p. 175; "Here hath been an order of the lords of the council hung up in a table near *Paul's* and *the Blackfriars*, to command all that resort to the playhouse there, to send away their coaches, and to disperse abroad in *Paul's Church-yard*, *Carter Lane*, *the Conduit in Fleet Street*, and other places, and not to return to fetch their company; but they must trot a-foot to find their coaches:—'twas kept very strictly for two or three weeks, but now, I think, it is disordered again."—It should, however, be remembered that this was written above forty years after Shakspeare's first acquaintance with the theatre. Coaches, in the time of queen Elizabeth were possessed but by very few. They were not in ordinary use till after the year 1605. See Stowe's *Annals*, p. 867.

In *A pleasant Dialogue between Coach and Sedan*, 4to. 1636, it is said, that, "the first coach that was seen in England was that presented to Queen Elizabeth by the earl of Arundel, in which she went from Somerset-House to St. Paul's Crosse, to hear a sermon on the victory obtained against the Spaniards in 1588."

"I wonder in my heart," (says the writer, who was born in 1578.) "why our nobilitie cannot in faire weather walke the streets as they were wont; as I have seene the earles of Shrewsbury, Darbie, Suffex, Cumberland, Essex, &c.—besides those inimitable presidents of courage and valour, Sir Francis Drake, Sir P. Sydney, Sir Martin Forbisher, &c. with a number of others,—when a coach was almost as rare as an elephant."

Even when the above mentioned order was made, there were no *hackney* coaches. These, as appears from another letter in the same collection, were established a few months afterwards. "I cannot (says Mr. Garrard) omit to mention any new thing that comes up amongst

Plays in the time of King James the First, (and probably afterwards,) appear to have been performed every day at each theatre during the winter season⁸, except in the time of Lent, when they were not permitted on the sermon days, as they were called, that is, on Wednesday and Friday; nor on the other days of the week, except by special licence; which however

us, though never so trivial. Here is one captain Bailly; he hath been a sea-captain, but now lives on the land, about this city, where he tries experiments. He hath erected, according to his ability, some *four hackney coaches*, put his men in livery, and appointed them to stand at the *May-pole* in the *Strand*, giving them instructions at what rates to carry men into several parts of the town, where all day they may be had. Other hackney men seeing this way, they flocked to the same place, and perform their journeys at the same rate. So that sometimes there is twenty of them together, which disperse up and down, that they and others are to be had every where, as water-men are to be had by the water-side. Every body is much pleased with it. For whereas, before, coaches could not be had but at great rates, now a man may have one much cheaper." This letter is dated April 1, 1634.—Stratford's *Letters*, Vol. I. p. 227.

A few months afterwards hackney chairs were introduced: "Here is also another project for carrying people up and down in *close chairs*, for the sole doing whereof, Sir Sander Duncombe, a traveller, now a pensioner, hath obtained a patent from the king, and hath forty or fifty making ready for use." Ibid. p. 336.

This species of conveyance had been used long before in Italy, from whence probably this traveller introduced it. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. *Carrivola*: "A kinde of chaire covered, used in *Italie* for to carrie men up and downe by porters, unscene of any bodie." In his second edition, 1611, he defines it, "A kind of covered chaire used in Italy, wherein men and women are carried by porters upon their shoulders."

⁷ See p. 110, n. 3. In an epigram by Sir John Davies, persons of an inferior rank are ridiculed for presuming to imitate noblemen and gentlemen in riding to the theatre:

"Faustus, nor lord, nor knight, nor wife, nor old,

"To every place about the town doth ride;

"He rides into the fields, plays to behold;

"He rides to take boat at the water-side."

Epigrams, printed at Middleburg, about 1598.

⁸ See Taylor's *Suit of the Watermen*, &c. Works, p. 171. "But my love is such to them, [the players,] that whereas they do play but once a day, I could be content they should play twice or thrice a day." "The players have all (except the King's men,) left their usual residency on the Bankside, and doe play in Middlesex far remote from the Thames, so that every day in the week they do draw unto them three or four thousand people." Ibidem.

In 1598, Hentzner says, plays were performed in the theatres which were then open, almost every day. "Sunt porro Londini extra urbem theatra aliquot, in quibus histriones Angli comœdias et tragœdias singulis fere diebus in magna hominum frequentia agunt." *Itin* 4to. 1598.

however was obtained by a fee paid to the Master of the Revells. In the summer season the stage exhibitions were continued, but during the long vacation they were less frequently repeated. However, it appears from Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript, that the king's company usually brought out two or three new plays at the Globe every summer⁹.

Though, from the want of newspapers and other periodical publications, intelligence was not so speedily circulated in former times as at present, our ancient theatres do not appear to have laboured under any disadvantage in this respect; for the players printed and exposed accounts of the pieces that they intended to exhibit¹, which, however, did not contain a list of the characters, or the names of the actors by whom they were represented².

The

⁹ In D'Avenant's Works we find "an Epilogue to a vacation play at the Globe." See also the Epistle to the Reader, prefixed to *Andromache*, a tragedy acted at the Duke's theatre, in 1675: "This play happening to be in my hands in the long vacation, a time when the playhouses are willing to catch at any reed to save themselves from sinking, to do the house a kindness, and to serve the gentleman who it seemed was desirous to see it on the stage, I willingly perused it.—The play deserved a better liking than it found; and had it been acted in the good well meaning times, when the *Cid*, *Heraclius*, and other French plays met such applause, this would have passed very well; but since our audiences have tasted so plentifully the firm English wit, these thin *regalies* will not down."

¹ "They use to set up their billes upon posts some certaine days before, to admonish the people to make resort to their theatres, that they may thereby be the better furnished, and the people prepared to fill their purses with their treasures." *Treatise against Idleness, vaine Playes and Interludes*, bl. let. (no date).

The antiquity of this custom likewise appears from a story recorded by Taylor the water-poet, under the head of *Wit and Mirth*. 30. "Master Field, the player, riding up Fleet-street a great pace, a gentleman called him, and asked him, what play was played that day. He being angry to be staied on so frivolous a demand, answered, that he might see what play was to be plaied upon every *poste*. I cry you mercy, said the gentleman, I took you for a *poste*, you rode so fast." Taylor's *Works*, p. 183.

Ames, in his *History of Printing*, p. 342, says, that James Roberts [who published some of our author's dramas] printed *bills for the players*.

It appears from the following entry on the Stationers' books that even the right of printing play-bills was at one time made a subject of monopoly:

"O^r. 1587. John Charlewoode.] Lycenced to him by the whole consent of the assisstants, the *onlye* ymprinting of all manner of *billes for players*. Provided that if any trouble arise herebye, then *Charlewoode* to beare the charges."

² This practice did not commence till the beginning of the present century

The long and whimsical titles which are prefixed to the quarto copies of our author's plays, were undoubtedly either written by bookellers, or transcribed from the play-bills of the time *. They were equally calculated to attract the notice of the idle gazer in the walks at St. Paul's, or to draw a crowd about some vociferous Autolycus, who perhaps was hired by the players thus to raise the expectations of the multitude. It is indeed absurd to suppose, that the modest Shakspeare, who has more than once apologized for his *unluted lines*, should in his manuscripts have entitled any of his dramas *most excellent and pleasant performances* †.

It

century. I have seen a play-bill printed in the year 1697, which expressed only the titles of the two pieces that were to be exhibited, and the time when they were to be represented. Notices of plays to be performed on a future day, similar to those now daily published, first appeared in the original edition of the *Spectators* in 1711. In these early theatrical advertisements our author is always styled the *immortal Shakspeare*. Hence Pope :

"Shakspeare, whom you and every play-house bill

"Style the *divine*, the matchless, what you will,—"

‡ Since the first edition of this essay I have found strong reason to believe that the former was the case. Nashe in the second edition of his *Supplication to the Devil*, 4to. 1592, complains that the printer had prefixed a pompous title to the first impression of his pamphlet, (published in the same year,) which he was much ashamed of, and rejected for one more simple. "Cut off," says he to his printer, "that long-tayld title, and let mee not in the fore-front of my booke make a tedious mountebanks oration to the reader." The printer's title, with which Nashe was displeased, is as follows: *Pierce Pennileffe his Supplication to the Diuell, describing the over-spreading of Vice and suppression of Vertue. Pleasantly interlaced with variable delights, and pathetically intermixt with conceited reprooves.* Written by Thomas Nashe, Gent. 1592." There is a striking resemblance between this and the titles prefixed to some of the copies of our author's plays, which are given at length in the next note. In the title-page of our author's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 4to. 1602, (see the next note,) *Sir Hugh* is called the *Welch knight*; a mistake into which Shakspeare could not have fallen.

Instead of the spurious title above given, Nashe in his second edition, printed apparently under his own inspection, (by Abel Jeffes, for John Busbie,) calls his book only—*Pierce Pennileffe his Supplication to the Diuell*.

§ The titles of the following plays may serve to justify what is here advanced :

"The *most excellent* Historie of the Merchant of Venice. With the extreame crueltie of Shylocke the Jewe towards the sayd Merchant, in cutting a iust pound of his flesh, and obtayning of Portia by the choyse of three caskets. As it hath been diuers times acted by the Lord Chamberlaine his Servants. Written by William Shakspeare. 1600."

"Mr. William Shak-speare his True Chronicle Historie of the Life and Death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. With the unfortunate

OF THE ENGLISH STAGE. 115

It is uncertain at what time the usage of giving authors a benefit on the third day of the representation of their plays commenced. Mr. Oldys, in one of his dissertations, estimates that dramatick poets had anciently their benefit on the first day that a new play was represented: a supposition which would have been very favourable to some of the ephemeral productions of modern times. I have found no authority which proves this to have been the case in the time of Shakspeare; but at the beginning of the present century it appears to have been customary in Lent for the *players* of the theatre in Drury-lane to divide the profits of the first representation of a new play among them⁵.

From D'Avenant, indeed, we learn, that in the latter part of the reign of queen Elizabeth, the poet had his benefit on the second day⁶. As it was a general practice, in the

fortunate life of Edgar, Sonne and Heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his fullen assumed humor of Tom of bedlam: As it was played before the Kings Majestie at Whitehall upon S. Stephens Night in Christmases Hollidayes. By his Majesties Servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bank-side. 1608."

"A most Pleasant and Excellent Conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaffe, and the Merry Wives of Windfor. Entermixed with sundrie variable and pleasing Humors of Sir Hugh, the Welch Knight, Justice Shallow, and his wife cousin, Mr. Slender. With the Swaggering Vaine of ancient Pistoll, and Corporal Nym. By William Shakspeare. As it hath been divers times acted by the Right Honourable my Lord Chamberlaines Servants; both before her Majestie and elsewhere. 1602."

"The History of Henric the Fourth; With the Battel at Shrewsburie, betweene the King and Lord Henric Percy, surnamed Henry Hotspur of the North. With the humorous conceits of Sir John Falstaffe. Newly corrected by W. Shakspeare. 1598."

"The Tragedie of King Richard The Third. Containing his treacherous Plots against his brother Clarence: The pitiful Murder of his innocent Nephews: his tiranous usurpation: with the whole course of his detested Life and most deserved Death. As it hath been lately acted by the Right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine his Servants. By William Shakspeare. 1597."

"The late and much-admired Play, called Pericles Prince of Tyre. With the true Relation of the whole Historie, adventures, and fortunes, of the said Prince: As also, the notable strange and worthy accidents in the Birth and Life of his Daughter Mariana. As it hath been divers and sundry times acted by his Majesties servants at the Globe on the Bank-side. By William Shakspeare. 1609."

⁵ Gildon's *Comparison between the Stages*, 1702, p. 9.

⁶ See *The Play-House to be Let*:

"Player

the time of Shakspeare, to sell the copy of the play to the theatre, I imagine, in such cases, an author derived no other advantage from his piece, than what arose from the sale of it. Sometimes, however, he found it more beneficial to retain the copy-right in his own hands; and when he did so, I suppose he had a benefit. It is certain that the giving authors the profits of the third exhibition of their play, which seems to have been the usual mode during a great part of the last century, was an established custom in the year 1612; for Decker, in the prologue to one of his comedies, printed in that year, speaks of the poet's *third day*?

The unfortunate Otway had no more than one benefit on the production of a new play; and this too, it seems, he was sometimes forced to mortgage, before the piece was acted¹.

Southerne

" *Player*.—There is an old tradition,
 " That in the times of mighty *Tamberlane*,
 " Of conjuring *Faustus* and the *Beauchamps bold*,
 " You poets us'd to have the *second day*;
 " This shall be ours, sir, and to-morrow yours.
 " *Poet*. I'll take my venture; 'tis agreed,"

7 " It is not praise is sought for now, but pence,
 " Though dropp'd from greasy-apron'd audience.
 " Clapp'd may he be with thunder, that plucks bays
 " With such foul hands, and with squint eyes doth gaze
 " On Pallas' shield, not caring, so he gains
 " A cram'd *third day*, what filth drops from his brains!"

Prologue to *If this be not a good play, the Devil's in't*, 1612.

Yet the following passages intimate, that the poet at a subsequent period had some interest in the *second day's* exhibition:

" Whether their sold scenes be disliked or hit,
 " Are cares for them who eat by the stage and wit;
 " He's one whose unbought muse did never fear
 " An empty *second day*, or a thin share."

Prologue to *The City Match*, a comedy, by J. Mayne, acted at Blackfriars in 1639.

So, in the prologue to *The Sophy*, by Sir John Denham, acted at Blackfriars in 1642:

" ———Gentlemen, if you dislike the play,
 " Pray make no words on't till the *second day*
 " Or *third* be past; for we would have you know it,
 " The loss will fall on us, not on the poet,
 " For he writes not for money."—

In other cases, then, it may be presumed, the loss either of the *second* or *third day*, did affect the author.

Since the above was written, I have learned from Sir Henry Herbert's office-book, that between the year 1625 and 1641, benefits were on the *second day* of representation.

" But which amongst you is there to be found,
 " Will take his *third day's* pawn, for fifty pound?"

Epilogue to *Caius Marius*, 1620.

Southerne was the first dramattick writer who obtained the emoluments arising from two representations⁹; and to Farquhar, in the year 1700, the benefit of a third was granted¹. but this appears to have been a particular favour to that gentleman; for several years afterwards dramattick poets had only the benefit of the third and sixth performance².

The profit of three representations did not become the established right of authors till after the year 1720³.

To the honour of Mr. Addison, it should be remembered, that he first discontinued the ancient, but humiliating, practice of distributing tickets, and soliciting company to attend at the theatre, on the poet's nights³.

When an author sold his piece to the sharers or proprietors of a theatre, it could not be performed by any other company⁴, and remained for several years unpublished⁵; but, when that

⁹ "I must make my boast, though with the most acknowledging respect, of the favours of the fair sex—in so visibly promoting my interest on those days chiefly, (the *third* and the *sixth*,) when I had the tender-relation to the welfare of my play."

Southerne's *Dedication of Sir Antony Love*, a comedy, 1691.

Hence Pope:

"May Tom, whom heaven sent down to raise

"The price of prologues and of plays," &c.

It should seem, however, to have been some time before this custom was uniformly established; for the author of *The Treacherous Brothers*, acted in 1696, had only one benefit:

"See't but three days, and fill the house, the *last*,

"He shall not trouble you again in haste." *Epilogue*.

¹ On the representation of *The Constant Couple*, which was performed fifty-three times in the year 1700. Farquhar, on account of the extraordinary success of that play, is said by one of his biographers, to have been allowed by the managers, the profits of *four* representations.

² "Let this play live; then we stand bravely fixt!

"But let none come his *third* day, nor the *sixth*."

Epilogue to The Island Princess, 1701.

"But should this fail, at least our author prays,

"A truce may be concluded for *six* days."

Epilogue to The Perplex'd Lovers, 1712.

In the preface to *The Humours of the Army*, printed in the following year, the author says, "It would be impertinent to go about to justify the play, because a prodigious full third night and a very good *sixth* are prevailing arguments in its behalf."

* Cibber in his *Dedication to Ximena or the Heroick Daughter*, printed in 1719, talks of bad plays lingering through *six* nights. At that time therefore poets certainly had but two benefits.

³ Southerne, by this practice, is said to have gained seven hundred pounds by one play.

⁴ "Whereas William Bickson, gent. governor of the kings and queens young company of players at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, has represented

that was not the case, he printed it for sale, to which many seem to have been induced from an apprehension that an imperfect

represented unto his majesty, that the severall playes hereafter mentioned, viz. *Wit without Money: The Night-Walkers: The Knight of the Burning Pestle: Fathers own Sonne: Cupids Revenge: The Bondman: The Renegado: A new Way to pay Debts: The great Duke of Florence: The Maid of Honour: The Traytor: The Example: The Young Admiral: The Opportunity: A witty sayre One: Love's Cruelty: The Wedding: The Maids Revenge: The Lady of Pleasure: The Schoole of Complement: The grateful Servant: The Coronation: Hyde Parke: Philip Chabot, Admiral of France: A Mad Couple well met: All's lost by Lust: The Changeling: A sayre Quarrel: The Spanish Gipsie: The World: The Sunnes Darling: Loves Sacrifice: 'Tis pity shee's a Whore: George a Greene: Loves Mistris: The Cunning Lovers: The Rape of Lucrece: A Trick to cheat the Devil: A Foole and her Maydenhead soone parted: King John and Matilda: A City Night-cap: The Bloody Banquet: Cupids Revenge: The conceited Duke: and Appius and Virginia,* doe all and every of them properly and of right belong to the sayd house, and consequently that they are all in his propriety. And to the end that any other companies of actors in or about London shall not presume to act any of them to the prejudice of him the sayd William Biefton and his company, his majesty hath signified his royal pleasure unto mee, thereby requiring mee to declare soe much to all other companies of actors hereby concernable, that they are not any wayes to intermeddle with or act any of the above-mentioned playes. Whereof I require all masters and governours of playhouses, and all others whom it may concerne, to take notice, and to forbear to impeach the sayd William Biefton in the premises, as they tender his majesties displeasure, and will answer the contempt. Given, &c. Aug. 10. 1639." Ms. in the Lord Chamberlain's office, entitled in the margin, *Cockpitt playes appropriated.*

5 Sometimes, however, an author, after having sold his piece to the theatre, either published it, or suffered it to be printed; but this appears to have been considered as dishonest. See the pref. to Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1638: "I had rather subscribe in that to their severe censure, than, by seeking to avoid the imputation of weakness, to incur a great suspicion of honesty; for though some have used a double sale of their labours, first to the stage, and after to the presse," &c.

How careful the proprietors were to guard against the publication of the plays which they had purchased, appears from the following admonition, directed to the Stationers' Company in the year 1637, by Philip earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, then Lord Chamberlain.

"After my hearty commendations.—Whereas complaint was heretofore presented to my dear brother and predecessor, by his majesties servants, the players, that some of the company of printers and stationers had procured, published, and printed, diverse of their books of comedies and tragedyes, chronicle histories and the like, which they had (for the special service of his majestye and for their own use) bought and provided at very dear and high-rates. By meanes whereof not only they themselves had much prejudice, but the books much corruption, the injury and disgrace of the authors. And thereupon the master and wardens of the company of printers and stationers were advised by my brother to take notice thereof, and to take order for the stay of any further impression of any of the playes or interludes of his majesties servants without their consents; which being a caution given with such respect,

and

fect copy might be issued from the press without their consent⁶. The customary price of the copy of a play, in the time of Shakspeare, appears to have been twenty nobles, or six pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence⁷. The play when printed was

and grounded on such weighty reasons, both for his majesties service and the particular interest of the players, and soe agreeable to common justice and that indifferent measure which every man would look for in his own particular, it might have been presumed that they would have needed no further order or direction in the business, notwithstanding which, I am informed that some copies of playes belonging to the king and queenes servants, the players, and purchased by them at dear rates, having beene lately stolen or gotten from them by indirect means, are now attempted to be printed, and that some of them are at the press, and ready to be printed; which, if it should be suffered, would directly tend to their apparent detriment and great prejudice, and to the disenabling them to do their majesties service: for prevention and redresse whereof, it is desired that order be given and entered by the master and wardens of the company of printers and stationers, that if any playes be already entered, or shall hereafter be brought unto the hall to be entered for printing, that notice thereof be given to the king and queenes servants, the players, and an enquiry made of them to whom they do belong; and that none bee suffered to be printed untill the assent of their majesties said servants be made appear to the Master and Wardens of the company of printers and stationers, by some certificate in writing under the hands of John Lowen, and Joseph Taylor, for the kings servants, and of Christopher Beeton for the king and queenes young company, or of such other persons as shall from time to time have the direction of these companies; which is a course that can be hurtfull unto none but such as are about unjustly to peravayle themselves of others' goods, without respect of order or good government; which I am confident you will be careful to avoyd, and therefore I recommend it to your special care. And if you shall have need of any further authority or power either from his majestye or the councill-table, the better to enable you in the execution thereof, upon notice given to mee either by yourselves or the players, I will endeavour to apply that further remedy thereto, which shall be requisite. And soe I bidd you very heartily farewell, and rest

Your very loving friend,

June 10, 1637.

P. and M.

"To the Master and Wardens of the Company of Printers and Stationers."

⁶ "One only thing affects me; to think, that scenes invented merely to be spoken, should be inforcively published to be read; and that the least hurt I can receive, is, to do myself the wrong. But since others otherwise would do me more, the least inconvenience is to be accepted: I have therefore myself set forth this comedie." Marston's pref. to the *Malecontent*, 1604.

⁷ See *The Defence of Cony-catching*, 1592: "Master R. G. [Robert Greene] would it not make you blush—if you sold *Orlando Furioso* to the queenes players for twenty nobles, and when they were in the country, sold the same play to Lord Admirals men, for as much more? Was not this plain cony-catching, M. G.?"

Oldys, in one of his manuscripts, says, that Shakspeare received but five pounds for his *Hamlet*; which, if true, the players who first acted it, or the printer or bookseller who first published it, is not distinguished. I do not believe he had any good authority for this assertion.

was sold for sixpence^s; and the usual present from a patron, in return for a dedication, was forty shillings^s.

On

In the latter end of the last century, it should seem an author did not usually receive more from his bookseller for a dramattick performance than 20*l.* or 25*l.* for Dryden, in a letter to his son, written about the year 1698, mentions, that the whole emoluments which he expected from a new play that he was about to produce, would not exceed one hundred pounds. Otway and Lee got but that sum by *Venice Preserved*, *The Orphan*, *Thoudusius*, and *Alexander the Great*; as Gildon, their contemporary, informs us. The profits of the third night were probably seventy pounds; the dedication produced either five or ten guineas, according to the munificence of the patron; and the rest arose from the sale of the copy.

Southerne, however, in consequence of the extraordinary success of his *Fatal Marriage* in 1694, sold the copy of that piece for thirty six pounds, as appears from a letter which has been kindly communicated to me by my friend, the Right Hon. Mr. Windham, and which, as it contains some new stage anecdotes, I shall print entire. This letter has been lately found by Mr. Windham among his father's papers, at Felbrigg in Norfolk; but, the signature being wanting, by whom it was written has not been ascertained:

"Dear Sir,

London, March the 22, 1693-4.

"I received but 10 days since the favour of your obliging letter, dated January the last, for which I return you a thousand thanks. I wish my scribbling could be diverting to you, I should oftner trouble you with my letters; but there is hardly any thing now to make it acceptable to you, but an account of our winter diversions, and chiefly of the new plays which have been the entertainment of the town.

"The first that was acted was Mr. Congreve's, called *The Double Dealer*. It has fared with that play, as it generally does with beauties officiously cried up; the mighty expectation which was raised of it made it sink, even beneath its own merit. The character of the Double Dealer is artfully writt, but the action being but single, and confined within the rules of true comedy, it could not please the generality of our audience, who relish nothing but variety, and think any thing dull and heavy which does not border upon farce.—The criticks were severe upon this play, which gave the authour occasion to lash 'em in his Epistle Dedicatory, in so defying or hectoring a style, that it was counted rude even by his best friends; so that 'tis generally thought he has done his business, and lost himself: a thing he owes to Mr. Dryden's treacherous friendship, who, being jealous of the applause he had got by his *Old Batchelour*, deluded him into a foolish imitation of his own way of writing angry prefaces.

"The 2d play is Mr. Dryden's, called *Love Triumphant, or Nature will prevail*. It is a tragi-comedy, but in my opinion one of the worst he ever writt, if not the very worst; the comical part descends beneath the style and shew of a Bartholomew-fair droll. It was damn'd by the universal cry of the town, *nemine contradicente*, but the conceited poet. He says in his prologue, that this is the last the town must expect from him: he had done himself a kindness, had he taken his leave before.

"The 3d is Mr. Southern's, called *The Fatal Marriage, or the Innocent Adultery*. It is not only the best authour ever writt, but is generally

On the first day of exhibiting a new play, the prices of admission

generally admired for one of the greatest ornaments of the stage, and the most entertaining play has appeared upon it these 7 years. The plot is taken out of Mrs. Behn's novel, called *The Unhappy Vow-Breaker*. I never saw Mrs. Barry act with so much passion as she does in it; I could not forbear being moved even to tears to see her act. Never was poet better rewarded or encouraged by the town; for besides an extraordinary full house, which brought him about 140l. 50 noblemen, among whom my lord Winchelsea was one, gave him guineas apiece, and the printer 36l. for his copy.

"This kind usage will encourage desponding minor poets, and vex huffing Dryden and Congreve to madness.

"We had another new play yesterday, called *The Ambitious Slave, or a generous Revenge*. Elkanah Settle is the authour of it, and the success is answerable to his reputation. I never saw a piece so wretched, nor worse contrived. He pretends 'tis a Persian story, but not one body in the whole audience could make any thing of it; 'tis a meer babel, and will sink for ever. The poor poet, seeing the house would not act it for him, and give him the benefit of the third day, made a present of it to the women in the house, who act it, but without profit or encouragement.

In 1707 the common price of the copy-right of a play was fifty pounds; though in that year Lintot the bookseller gave Edmund Smith fifty guineas for his *Phædra and Hippolitus*.

In 1715, Sir Richard Steele sold Mr. Addison's comedy, called *The Drummer*, to J. Tonson for fifty pounds: and in 1721, Dr. Young received the same price for his tragedy of *The Revenge*. Two years before, however, (1719) Southerne, who seems to have understood author-craft better than any of his contemporaries, sold his *Spartan Dame* for the extraordinary sum of 120l.; and in 1726 Lintot paid the celebrated plagiarist, James Moore Smyth, one hundred guineas for a comedy, entitled *The Rival Modes*. From that time, this appears to have been the customary price for several years; but of late, (though rarely) one hundred and fifty pounds have been given for a new play. The finest tragick poet of the present age, Mr. JERPHSON, received that price for two of his admirable tragedies.

⁸ See the preface to the quarto edition of *Troilus and Cressida*, 1609: "Had I time, I would comment upon it, though it needs not, for so much as will make you think your *testerne* well bestowed, but for so much worth as even poor I know to be stuf in it," &c.

See also the preface to Randolph's *Jealous Lovers*, a comedy, 1632: "Courtous reader, I beg thy pardon, if I put thee to the expence of a *hupence*, and the less of half an hour."

⁹ "I did determine not to have dedicated my play to any body, because *forty shillings* I care not for; and above, few or none will bestow on these matters." Dedication to *A Woman's a Weathercock*, a comedy, by N. Field. 1612.

See also the Authour's *Epistle popular*, prefixed to *Cynthia's Revenge*, 1613: "Thus do our pie-bald naturalists depend upon poor wages, gape after the drunken harvest of *forty shillings*, and shame the worthy benefactors of *Hedison*."

2 HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

admission appear to have been raised¹, sometimes to double, sometimes to treble, prices²; and this seems to have been occasionally practised on the benefit-nights of authors, and on the representation of expensive plays, to the year 1726 in the present century³.

Dramatick poets in ancient times, as at present, were admitted gratis into the theatre⁴.

It

Soon after the Revolution, five, and sometimes ten, guineas seems to have been the customary present on these occasions. In the time of George the First, it appears from one of Swift's Letters that twenty guineas were usually presented to an author for this piece of flattery.

¹ This may be collected from the following verses by J. Mayne, to the memory of Ben Jonson:

"He that writes well, writes quick, since the rule's true,

"Nothing is slowly done; that's always new;

"So when thy *Fox* had ten times acted been,

"Each day was first, but that 'twas cheaper seen."

² See the last line of the Prologue to *Tunbridge Wells*, 1672, quoted in p. 69, n. 7.

³ Downes, speaking of the *Squire of Alsatia*, acted in 1688, says, "the poet received for his third day in the house in Drury Lane at single prices, 130l. which was the greatest receipt they ever had at single prices." Hence it appears that the prices were sometimes raised; and after the Restoration the additional prices were, I believe, demanded during what is called in the language of the theatre the first run of a new piece. At least this was the case in the present century. See the Epilogue to *Hecuba*, a tragedy, 1726:

"What, a new play, without new scenes and cloaths!

"Without a friendly party from the Rose!

"And what against a run still prepossesses,

"'Twas on the bills put up at common prices."

See also the Epilogue to *Love at first sight*:

"Wax tapers, gawdy cloaths, rais'd prices too,

"Yet even the play thus garnish'd would not do."

In 1702 the prices of admission were in a fluctuating state. "The people," says Gildon, "never were in a better humour for plays, nor were the houses ever so crowded, though the rates have run very high, sometimes to a scandalous excess; never did printed plays rise to such a price, — never were so many poets preferred as in the last ten years." *Comparison between the two stages*, 1702. The price of a printed play about that time rose to eighteen-pence.

⁴ See verses by J. Steele to his worthy friend, H. Fitz-Jeffery, on his *Notes from Black-Jack*, 1717:

"I must,

"Though it be a player's vice to be unjust

"To verse not yielding coyne, let players know,

"They cannot recompence your labour, though

"They grace you with a chayre upon the stage,

"And take no money of you, nor your page."

So in *The Playhouse to be let*, by Sir W. D'Avenant:

"Poet. Do you set up for yourselves, and profess wit,

"Without

It appears from Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book that the king's company between the years 1662 and 1641 produced either at Blackfriars or the Globe at least four new plays every year. Every play, before it was represented on the stage, was licensed by the Master of the Revels, for which he received in the time of Queen Elizabeth but a noble, though at a subsequent period the stated fee on this occasion rose to two pounds.

Neither Queen Elizabeth, nor King James the First, nor Charles the First, I believe, ever went to the publick theatre; but they frequently ordered plays to be performed at court, which were represented in the royal theatre called the Cock-pit, in Whitehall: and the actors of the king's company were sometimes commanded to attend his majesty in his summer's progress, to perform before him in the country^s.

G 2

Queen

"Without help of your authors? Take heed, sirs,

"You'll get few customers.

"*Houfekeeper.* Yes, we shall have the poets.

"*Poet.* 'Tis because they pay nothing for their entrance."

"Whereas William Pen, Thomas Hobbes, William Trigg, William Patrick, Richard Baxter, Alexander Gough, William Hart, and Richard Hawley, together with ten more or thereabouts of their fellows, his majesties comedians, and of the regular company of players in the Blackfryers, London, are commaunded to attend his majestie, and be nigh about the court this summer progress, in readinesse, when they shall be called upon to act before his majestie: for the better enabling and encouraging them whereunto, his majesty is graciously pleased that they shall, as well before his majesties setting forth on his maine progresse, as in all that time, and after, till they shall have occasion to returne homewards, have all freedome and liberty to repayre unto all towns corporate, mercate townes, and others, where they shall thinke fitt, and there in their common halls, mootehalls, school-houses or other convenient roomes, act playes, comedyes, and interludes, without any lett, hindrance, or molestation whatsoever (behaving themselves civilly). And herein it is his majesties pleasure, and he does expect, that in all places where they come, they be treated and entertayned with such due respect and courtesie as may become his majesties loyal and loving subjects towards his servants. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seale at arms. Dated at Whitehall, the 17th of May, 1636.

To all Mayors, &c.

P. and M."

Mf. in the Lord Chamberlain's office.

This is entitled in the margin—*A Player's Pasts*.

William Hart, whose name occurs in the foregoing list, and who undoubtedly was the eldest son of Joan Hart, our poet's sister, is mentioned in another warrant, with ten others, as a *dependant* on the players,—*"employed by his Majesties servants of the Blackfryers, and of special use unto them, both on the stage and otherwise."*

This paper having escaped my memory, when a former part of this work was printing, [see Vol. I. p. 135, n. 8. and p. 149, n. 1.]

I suggested

Queen Henrietta Maria, however, went sometimes to the publick theatre at Blackfriars⁶. I find from the Council-books that in the time of Elizabeth ten pounds was the payment for a play performed before her; that is, twenty nobles, or six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four-pence, as the regular and stated fee; and three pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence, by way of bounty or reward. The same sum, as I learn from the manuscript notes of lord Stanhope, Treasurer of the Chamber to king James the First, continued to be paid during his reign: and this was the stated payment during the reign of his successor also. Plays at court were usually performed at night, by which means they did not interfere with the regular exhibition at the publick theatres, which was early in the afternoon; and thus the royal bounty was for so much a clear profit to the company: but when a play was commanded to be performed at any of the royal palaces in the neighbourhood of London, by which the actors were prevented from deriving any profit from a publick exhibition on the same day, the fee, as appears from a manuscript in the Lord Chamberlain's office, was, in the year 1630, and probably in Shakspeare's time also, twenty pounds; and
this

I suggested that *Michael Hart*, our poet's youngest nephew, was probably the father of *Charles Hart*, the celebrated tragedian; but without doubt his father was *William*, (the elder brother of *Michael*,) who, we find, settled in London, and was an actor. It is highly probable that he left Stratford before his uncle Shakspeare's death, at which time he was sixteen years old; and in consequence of that connexion found an easy introduction to the stage. He probably married in the year 1625, and his son *Charles* was, I suppose, born in 1626. Before the accession of *Charles the First*, the christian name of *Charles* was so uncommon, that it scarcely ever occurs in our early parish-registers. *Charles Hart* was a lieutenant under *Sir Thomas Dallison* in *Prince Rupert's* regiment, and fought at the battle of *Edgehill*, at which time, according to my supposition, he was but seventeen years old; but such early exertions were not at that time uncommon. *William Hart*, who has given occasion to the present note, died in 1639, and was buried at his native town of *Stratford* on the 28th of *March* in that year.

⁶ "The 13 May, 1634, the Queene was at Blackfryers, to see Messengers playe."—The playe which her majesty honoured with her presence was *The Tragedy of Cleander*, which had been produced on the 7th of the same month, and is now lost, with many other pieces of the same writer.

⁷ "Whereas by virtue of his majesties letters patent bearing date the 16th of June, 1625, made and graunted in confirmation of diverse warrants and privy seales unto you formerly directed in the time of our late Sovereigne king James, you are authorized (amongst other things) to make payment for playes acted before his majesty and the queene. I heis are to pray and require you, out of his majesties treasure in your charge,

this circumstance I formerly stated, as strongly indicating that the sum last mentioned was a very considerable produce on any one representation at the Blackfriars or Globe play-house. The office-book which I have so often quoted, has fully confirmed my conjecture.

The custom of passing a final censure on plays at their first exhibition⁸, is as ancient as the time of our author; for no less than three plays⁹ of his rival, Ben Jonson, appear to have been

charge, to pay or cause to be payed unto *John Lowing*, in the behalfe of himselfe and the rest of the company of his majesties players, the sum of two hundred and sixty pounds; that is to say, *twenty pounds* apiece for foure playes acted at Hampton Court, in respect and consideration of the travaile and expence of the whole company in dyet and lodging during the time of their attendance there; and the like somme of *twenty pounds* for one other play which was acted in the day time at Whitehall, by meanes whereof the players lost the benefit of their house for that day; and *ten pounds* apiece for sixteen other playes acted before his majesty at Whitehall: amounting in all unto the sum of two hundred and sixty pounds for one and twenty playes his majesties servaunts acted before his majestie and the queene at severall times, between the 30th of Sept. and the 21st of Feb. last past. As it may appeare by the annexed schedule.

• "And theis, &c. March 17, 1630-1."

Ms. in the Lord Chamberlain's office.

⁸ The custom of expressing disapprobation of a play, and interrupting the drama, by the noise of *catcalls*, or at least by imitating the tones of a cat, is probably as ancient as Shakspeare's time; for Decker in his *Gull's Horne-lost*, counsels the gallant, if he wishes to disgrace the poet, "to *tubew* at the children's action, to whistle at the songs, and *mevo* at the passionate speeches." See also the induction to *The Isle of Gulls*, a comedy, 1606: "Either see it all or none; for 'tis grown into a custom at plays, if any one rise, (especially of any fashionable sort,) about what serious business soever, the rest, thinking it in dislike of the play, (though he never thinks it,) cry—"mevo,—by Jesus, vile,"—and leave the poor heartless children to speak their epilogue to the empty seats."

⁹ *Sejanus*, *Catiline*, and *The New Inn*. Of the two former Jonson's *Ghost* is thus made to speak in an epilogue to *Every Man in his Humour*, written by Lord Buckhurst, about the middle of the last century:

"Hold, and give way, for I myself will speak:

"Can you encourage so much insolence,

"And add new faults still to the great offence

"Your ancestors so rashly did commit,

"Against the mighty powers of art and wit,

"When they condemn'd those noble works of mine,

"*Sejanus*, and my best-lov'd *Catiline*?"

The title-page of *The New Inn*, is a sufficient proof of its condemnation. Another piece of this writer does not seem to have met with a very favourable reception; for Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden (Jonson's friend) informs us, that "when the play of *The Silent Woman* was first acted, there were found verses, after, on the stage, against him, [the author,] concluding, that that play was well named *The Silent Woman*, because

been deservedly damned¹; and Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, written by him and Beaumont, underwent the same fate².

It is not easy to ascertain what were the emoluments of a successful actor in the time of Shakspeare. They had not then annual benefits, as at present³. The clear emoluments of the theatre, after deducting the nightly expences for lights, men occasionally hired for the evening, &c. which in Shakspeare's house was but forty-five shillings, were divided into shares, of which part belonged to the proprietors, who were called housekeepers, and the remainder was divided among the actors, according to their rank and merit. I suspect that the whole clear receipt was divided into forty shares, of which perhaps the housekeepers or proprietors had fifteen, the actors twenty-two, and three were devoted to the purchase of new plays, dresses, &c. From Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, it should seem that one of the performers had seven shares and a half⁴, but of what integral sum is not mentioned. The person

cause there was never one man to say *plaudite* to it." Drummond's *Works*, fol. p. 226.

¹ The term, as well as the practice, is ancient. See the epilogue to *The Unfortunate Lovers*, by Sir W. D'Avenant, 1643:

" ——— Our poet —

" ——— will never wish to see us thrive,

" If by an humble epilogue we strive

" To court from you that privilege to-day,

" Which you so long have had, to damn a play."

² See in p. 85 (n. 4.) Verses addressed to Fletcher on his *Faithful Shepherdess*.

³ See the epistle prefixed to the first edition of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, in 1613.

⁴ Cibber says in his *Apology*, p. 96, "Mrs. Barry was the first person whose merit was distinguished by the indulgence of having an annual benefit-play, which was granted to her alone, if I mistake not, first in king James's time; and which became not common to others, till the division of this company, after the death of king William's queen Mary."

But in this as in many other facts he is inaccurate; for it appears from an agreement entered into by Dr. D'Avenant, Charles Hart, Thomas Betterton, and others, dated October 14, 1681, that the actors had *then* benefits. By this agreement five shillings, apiece, were to be paid to Hart and Kynaston the players, "for every day there shall be any tragedies or comedies or other representations acted at the Duke's theatre in Salisbury Court, or wherever the company shall act, during the respective lives of the said Charles Hart and Edward Kynaston, *excepting the days the young men or young women play for their own profit only*." Gildon's *Life of Betterton*, p. 8.

⁵ "Tucca, Fare thee well, my honest penny-biter: commend me to seven shares and a half, and remember to-morrow.—If you lack a *service* you

person alluded to, (if any person was alluded to, which is not certain,) must, I think, have been a proprietor, as well as a principal actor. Our poet in his *Hamlet* speaks of a *whole share*, as no contemptible emolument; and from the same play we learn that some of the performers had only half a share⁶. Others probably had still less.

It appears from a deed executed by Thomas Killigrew and others, that in the year 1666, the whole profit arising from acting plays, masques, &c. at the king's theatre, was divided into *twelve shares and three quarters*⁷, of which Mr. Killigrew, the

you shall play in my name, rascals; [alluding to the custom of actors calling themselves the *servants* of certain noblemen,] but you shall buy your own cloth, and I'll have *two shares* for my countenance." *Pocaster*, 1602.

⁶ "Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provencial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?"

"*Hor.* Half a share.

"*Ham.* A whole share, I." *Hamlet*, Act III. sc. ii.

In a poem entitled *I would and I would not*, by B. N. 1614, the writer makes a player utter a wish to possess *five shares* in every play; but I do not believe that any performer derived so great an emolument from the stage, unless he were also a proprietor. The speaker seems to wish for excellence that was never yet attained, (to be able to act every part that was ever written,) that he might gain an emolument *superior* to any then acquired by the most popular and successful actor:

"I would I were a player, and could act

"As many partes as came upon a stage,

"And in my braine could make a full compact

"Of all that passeth betwixt youth and age;

"That I might have *five shares* in every play,

"And let them laugh that bear the bell away."

The actors were treated with less respect than at present, being sometimes interrupted during their performance, on account of supposed personalities; for the same author adds—

"And yet I would not; for then do I feare,

"If I should gall some *goose-cap* with my speech,

"That he would freat, and fume, and chafe, and swear,

"As if some flea had bit him by the breech;

"And in some passion or strange agonie

"Disturb both mee and all the companie."

On some occasions application was made by individuals to the Master of the Revels, to restrain this licentiousness of the stage; as appears from the following note:

"Octob. 1633. Exception was taken by Mr. Sewster to the second part of *The City Shuffler*, which gave mee occasion to stay the play, till the company [of Salisbury Court] had given him satisfaction; which was done the next day, and under his hande he did certifie mee that he was satisfied." *Mss. Herbert*.

⁷ In an indenture tripartite, dated December 31, 1666, (which I have

the manager, had two shares and three quarters; and if we may trust to the statement in another very curious paper, inserted below, (which however was probably exaggerated,) each share produced, at the lowest calculation, about 250*l.* per ann. *net*; and the total clear profits consequently were about 3187*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*

These shares were then distributed among the proprietors of the theatre, who at that time were not actors, the performers, and the dramattick poets, who were retained in the service of the theatre, and received a part of the annual produce as a compensation for the pieces which they produced.⁹

In

have seen) between Thomas Killigrew and Henry Killigrew, his son and heir of the first part, Thomas Porter, Esq. of the second part, and Sir John Sayer and Dame Catherine Sayer, his wife, of the third part, it is recited, (*inter alia*,) that the profits arising by acting of plays, masques, &c. then performed by the company of actors called the king and queen's players, were by agreement amongst themselves and Thomas Killigrew, divided into *twelve shares and three quarters*, and that Thomas Killigrew was to have two full shares and three quarters. And by agreement between Henry and Thomas, Henry was to have four pounds per week, out of the two shares of Thomas, except such weeks when the players did not act.

In 1682, when the two companies united, the profits of acting, we are told by Colley Cibber, were divided into *twenty shares*, ten of which went to the proprietors or patentees, and the other moiety to the actors, in different divisions proportioned to their merit.

⁸ Wright says in his *Historia Histrionica* that he had been assured by an old actor, that "for several years next after the Restoration every whole sharer in Mr. Hart's company, [that is, the King's servants,] got 1000*l.* per ann." But his informer was undoubtedly mistaken, as is proved by the petition or memorial printed below, (see n. 9.) and by Sir Henry Herbert's statement of Thomas Killigrew's profits. If every whole sharer had got 1000*l.* per ann. then the annual receipts must have been near 13,000*l.* In 1743, after Mr. Garrick had appeared, the theatre of Drury-lane did not receive more than 15,000*l.* per ann.

⁹ Gildon in his *Lives of Poetry*, 8vo. 1721, observes, that "after the Restoration, when the two houses struggled for the favour of the town, the taking poets were secured to either house by a sort of retaining fee, which seldom or never amounted to more than forty shillings a week, nor was that of any long continuance." He appears to have under-rated their profits; but the fact to which he alludes is incontestably proved by the following paper, which remained long in the hands of the Killigrew family, and is now in the possession of Mr. Reed of Staple-Inn, by whom it was obligingly communicated to me some years ago. The superscription is lost, but it was probably addressed to the Lord Chamberlain, or the King, about the year 1678:

"Whereas upon Mr. Dryden's binding himself to write three plays a yeere, hee the said Mr. Dryden was admitted and continued as a sharer in the king's playhouse for diverse years, and received for his share and a quarter

In a paper delivered by Sir Henry Herbert to Lord Clarendon and the Lord Chamberlain, July 11, 1662, which will be found in a subsequent page, he states the emolument which Mr. Thomas Killigrew then derived (from his two shares and three quarters,) at £ 19. 6. 0. *per week*; according to which statement each share in the king's company produced but two hundred and ten pounds ten shillings a year. In Sir William D'Avenant's company, from the time their new theatre was opened in Portugal-row near Lincoln's Inn fields,

G 5

quarter three or four hundred pounds, *communibus annis*; but though he received the moneys, we received not the playes, not one in a year. After which, the house being burnt, the company in building contracted great debts, so that shares fell much short of what they were formerly. Thereupon Mr. Dryden complaining to the company of his want of profit, the company was so kind to him that they not only did not presse him for the playes which he so engaged to write for them, and for which he was paid beforehand, but they did also at his earnest request give him a third day for his last new play called *All for Love*; and at the receipt of the money of the said third day, he acknowledged it as a gift, and a particular kindnesse of the company. Yet notwithstanding this kind proceeding, Mr. Dryden has now, jointly with Mr. Lee, (who was in pension with us to the last day of our playing, and shall continue,) written a play called *Oedipus*, and given it to the Duke's company, contrary to his said agreement, his promise, and all gratitude, to the great prejudice and almost undoing of the company, they being the only poets remaining to us. Mr. Crowne, being under the like agreement with the duke's house, writt a play called *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, and being forced by their refusall of it, to bring it to us, the said company compelled us, after the studying of it, and a vast expence in scenes and cloathes, to buy off their clayme, by paying all the pension he had received from them, amounting to one hundred and twelve pounds paid by the king's company, besides neere forty pounds he the said Mr. Crowne paid out of his owne pocket.

"These things considered, if, notwithstanding Mr. Dryden's said agreement, promise, and moneys freely given him for his said last new play, and the many titles we have to his writings, this play be judged away from us, we must submit.

(Signed)

Charles Killigrew.

Charles Hart.

Rich. Burt.

Cardell Goodman.

Mic. Mchun."

It has been thought very extraordinary that Dryden should enter into a contract to produce three new plays every year; and undoubtedly that any poet should formally *stipulate* that his genius should be thus productive, is extraordinary. But the exertion itself was in the last age not uncommon. In ten years, from the death of Beaumont in 1615 to the year 1625, I have good reason to believe that Fletcher produced near thirty plays. Massinger between 1623 and 1638 brought out nearly the same number; and Shirley in fifteen years furnished various theatres with forty plays. Thomas Heywood was still more prolific.

fields, (April 1662,) the total receipt (after deducting the nightly charges of "men hirelings and other customary expences,") was divided into fifteen shares, of which it was agreed by articles previously entered into¹, that ten should belong to D'Avenant; viz. two "towards the house-rent, buildings, scaffolding, and making of frames for scenes; one for a provision of habits, properties, and scenes, for a supplement of the said theatre; and seven to maintain all the women that are to perform or represent women's parts, in tragedies, comedies, &c. and in consideration of erecting and establishing his actors to be a company, and his pains and expences for that purpose for many years." The other five shares were divided in various proportions among the rest of the troop.

In the paper above referred to it is stated by Sir Henry Herbert, that D'Avenant "drew from these ten shares two hundred pounds a week;" and if that statement was correct, each share in his playhouse then produced annually six hundred pounds, supposing the acting season to have then lasted for thirty weeks.

Such were the emoluments of the theatre soon after the Restoration; which I have stated here, from authentick documents, because they may assist us in our conjectures concerning the profits derived from stage-exhibitions at a more remote and darker period.

From the prices of admission into our ancient theatres in the time of Shakspeare, which have been already noticed, I formerly conjectured that about twenty pounds was a considerable receipt at the Blackfriars and Globe theatre, on any one day; and my conjecture is now confirmed by indisputable evidence. In Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book I find the following curious notices on this subject, under the year 1628.

"The kinges company with a generall consent and alacritye have given mee the benefitt of too dayes in the yeare, the one in summer, thiother in winter, to bee taken out of the second daye of a revived playe, att my owne choyse. The housekeepers have likewyle given their shares, their dayly charge only deducted, which comes to some 2l. 5s. this 25 May, 1628.

"The benefitt of the first day, being a very unseasonable one in respect of the weather, comes but unto £4. 15s. 0."

This

¹ These articles will be found in a subsequent page.

This agreement subsisted for five years and a half, during which time Sir Henry Herbert had ten benefits, the most profitable of which produced seventeen pounds, and ten shillings, *net*, on the 22d of Nov. 1628, when Fletcher's *Custom of the Country* was performed at Blackfriars; and the least emolument which he received was on the representation of a play which is not named, at the Globe, in the summer of the year 1632, which produced only the sum of one pound, and five shillings, after deducting from the total receipt in each instance the nightly charge above mentioned. I shall give below the receipt taken by him on each of the ten performances; from which it appears that his clear profit at an average, on each of his nights, was £. 8. 19. 4.² and the total nightly receipt was at an average—£. 11. 4. 4.

On

² 1628, May 25, [the play not named,]—£. 4. 15. 0.

"The benefit of the winters day, being the second day of an old play called *The Customs of the Cuntry*, came to £. 17. 10. 0. this 22 of Nov. 1628. From the Kinges company at the Blackfriars.

1629. "The benefit of the summers day from the kinges company being brought mee by Blagrave, upon the play of *The Prophetess*, comes to, this 22 of July, 1629,—£. 6. 7. 0.

"The benefit of the winters day from the kinges company being brought mee by Blagrave, upon the play of *The Moore of Venise*, comes, this 22 of Nov. 1629 unto—£. 9. 16. 0.

1630. [No play this summer, on account of the plague.]

"Received of Mr. Taylor and Lowins, in the name of their company, for the benefit of my winter day, upon the second day of Ben Jonson's play of *Every man in his humour*, this 18 of February, 1630, [1630-31]—£. 12. 4. 0.

1631. "Received of Mr. Shanke, in the name of the kings company, for the benefit of their summer day, upon ye second daye of *Richard y^e Seconde*, at the Globe, this 12 of June, 1631,—£. 5. 6. 6.

"Received of Mr. Blagrave, in the name of the kings company for the benefit of my winter day, taken upon *The Alchemiste*, this 1 of Decemb. 1631,—£. 13. 0. 0.

1632. "Received for the summer day of the kings company ye 6 Novemb. 1632,—£. 1. 5. 0.

"Received for the winter day upon *The Wild goose chase*, ye same day,—£. 15. 0. 0.

1633. "R. of ye kings company, for my summers day, by Blagrave, the 6 of June 1633, ye somme of £. 4. 10. 0.

I likewise find the following entry in this book:

Received of Mr. Benfelde, in the name of the kings company, for a gratuity for ther liberty gaine unto them of playinge, upon the cessation of the plague, this 10 of June, 1631,—£. 3. 10. 0."—"This (Sir Henry Herbert adds) was taken upon *Pericles* at the Globe."

In

On the 30th of October, 1633, the managers of the king's company agreed to pay him the fixed sum of ten pounds every Christmas, and the same sum at Midsummer, in lieu of his two benefits, which sums they regularly pay'd him from that time till the breaking out of the civil wars.

From the receipts on these benefits I am led to believe that the prices were lower at the Globe theatre, and that therefore, though it was much larger than the winter theatre at Blackfriars, it did not produce a greater sum of money on any representation. If we suppose twenty pounds, clear of the nightly charges already mentioned, to have been a very considerable receipt at either of these houses, and that this sum was in our poet's time divided into forty shares, of which fifteen were appropriated to the housekeepers or proprietors, three to the purchase of copies of new plays, stage-habits, &c. and twenty-two to the actors, then the performer who had two shares on the representation of each play, received, when the theatre was thus successful, twenty shillings. But supposing the *average* nightly receipt (after deducting the nightly expences) to be about nine pounds, which we have seen to be the case, then his nightly dividend would be but
nine

In a copy of a play called *A Game at Chesse*, 1624, which was formerly in possession of Thomas Pearson, Esq. is the following memorandum in an old hand: "After nine days, wherein I have heard some of the actors say they took fifteen hundred pounds, the Spanish faction, being prevalent, got it suppressed, and the author Mr. Thomas Middleton committed to prison." According to this statement, they received above 166l. 12s. on each performance. The foregoing extracts shew, that there is not even a semblance of truth in this story. In the year 1685, when the London theatres were much enlarged, and the prices of admission greatly increased, Shadwell received by his third day on the representation of *The Squire of Alsatia*, only 130l. which Downes the prompter says was the greatest receipt had been ever taken at Drury-lane play-house at single prices. *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 41.

The use of Arabick figures has often occasioned very gross errors to pass current in the world. I suppose the utmost receipt from the performance of Middleton's play for nine days, [if it was performed so often,) could not amount to more than one hundred and fifty pounds. To the sum of 130l. which perhaps this old actor had seen as the profit made by this play, his fancy or his negligence added a cipher, and thus made fifteen hundred pounds.

The play of *Holland's Leaguer* was acted six days successively at Salisbury Court, in December 1631, and yet Sir Henry Herbert received on account of the six representations but one pound nineteen shillings, in virtue of the ninth share which he possessed as one of the proprietors of that house. Supposing there were twenty-one shares divided among the actors, the piece, though performed with such extraordinary success, did not produce more than six pounds ten shillings each night, exclusive of the occasional nightly charges already mentioned.

nine shillings, and his weekly profit, if they played five times a week, two pound five shillings. The acting season, I believe, at that time lasted forty weeks. In each of the companies then subsisting there were about twenty persons, six of whom probably were principal, and the others subordinate; so that we may suppose *two shares* to have been the reward of a principal actor; six of the second class perhaps enjoyed a whole share each; and each of the remaining eight half a share. On all these *data*, I think it may be safely concluded that the performers of the first class did not derive from their profession more than ninety pounds a year at the utmost. Shakspeare, Heminge, Condell, Burbadge, Lowin, and Taylor, had without doubt other shares as proprietors or leaseholders; but what the different proportions were which each of them possessed in that right, it is now impossible to ascertain. According to the supposition already stated, that fifteen shares out of forty were appropriated to the proprietors, then was there on this account a sum of six hundred and seventy-five pounds annually to be divided among them. Our poet, as author, actor, and proprietor, probably received from the theatre about two hundred pounds a year.—Having after a very long search lately discovered the will of Mr. Heminge, I hoped to have derived from it some information on this subject; but I was disappointed. He indeed more than once mentions his several parts or *shares held by lease in the Globe and Blackfriars playhouses*³; but uses no expression by which the value of each of those shares can be ascertained. His books of account, which he appears to have regularly kept, and which, he says, will shew that his shares yielded him “*a good yearly profit*,” will probably, if they shall ever be found, throw much light on our early stage history.

Thus scanty and meagre were the apparatus and accommodations of our ancient theatres, on which those dramas were first exhibited, that have since engaged the attention of so many

³ “The verye hyerlings of some of our plaiers,” [i. e. men occasionally hired by the night] says Stephen Gosson in the year 1579, “which stand at reversion of vi s. by the weeke, yet under gentlemens noses in sut. of silke.” *Schoole of Abuse*, p. 22.

Hart, the celebrated tragedian, after the Restoration had but three pounds a week as an actor, that is, about ninety pounds a year; for the acting season did not, I believe, at that time, exceed thirty weeks; but he had besides, as a proprietor, six shillings and three pence every day on which there was any performance at the king's theatre, which produced about £. 56. 5. 0. more. Betterton even at the beginning of the present century had not more than five pounds a week.

⁴ See his Will in a subsequent page.

many learned men, and delighted so many thousand spectators. Yet even then, we are told by a writer of that age¹, "dramatick poesy was so lively expressed and represented on the publick stages and theatres of this city, as Rome in the *auge* of her pomp and glory, never saw it better performed; in respect of the action and art, not of the cost and sumptuousness."

Of the actors on whom this high encomium is pronounced, the original performers in our author's plays were undoubtedly the most eminent. The following is the only information that I have obtained concerning them.

NAMEs

¹ Sir George Buc. This writer, as I have already observed, wrote an express treatise concerning the English stage, which was never printed and, I fear, is now irrecoverably lost. As he was a friend of Sir Robert Cotton, I hoped to have found the Manuscript in the Cottonian library, but was disappointed. "Of this art," [the dramatick] says Sir George, "have written largely *Petrus Victorius*, &c. as it were in vaine for me to say any thing of the art, besides that *I have written thereof a particular treatise*." *The third University of England*, printed originally in 1615, and re-printed at the end of Howes' edition of Stowe's *Annals*, folio, 1631, p. 1082. It is singular that a similar work on the Roman stage, written by Suetonius, (*De Spectaculis et Certaminibus Romanorum*,) has also perished. Some little account of their scenery, and of the separation of the mimes and pantomimes from comedies, in which they were originally introduced, are the only particulars of this treatise that have been preserved; for which we are indebted to Servius, and Diomedes the grammarian. The latter fragment is curious, as it exhibits an early proof of that competition and jealousy, which, from the first rise of the stage to the present time, has disturbed the peace of theatres.

"*Latinae vero comediae chorum non habent, sed duobus tantum membris constant, diverbio, et cantico. Primis autem temporibus, ut asserit Tranquillus, omnia quae in scena versantur, in comedia agebantur. Nam Pantomimus et Pithaules et Choraules in comedia caneant. Sed quia non poterant omnia simul apud omnes artifices pariter excellere, si qui erant inter actores comediae pro facultate et arte potiores, principatum sibi artificii vindicabant. Sic factum est, ut nolentibus cedere Mimis in artificio suo ceteris, separatio fieret reliquorum. Nam dum potiores inferioribus, qui in omni ergasterio erant, servire dedignabantur, seipsos a comedia separaverunt: ac sic factum est, ut, exemplo semel sumpto, unusquisque artis suae rem exequi ceperit, neque in comediam venire.*"

Grammaticae linguae Auctores Antiqui, Putschii, p. 489. Hanov. 1605.

I have said in a former page (40) that I believed Sir George Buc died soon after the year 1622, and I have since found my conjecture confirmed. He died, as I learn from one of Sir Henry Herbert's papers, on the 20th of September, 1623.

NAMES OF THE ORIGINAL ACTORS IN THE
PLAYS OF SHAKSPEARE.

From the folio, 1623.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Having now once more occasion to mention our poet, I shall take this opportunity to correct an error into which I suspect I have fallen, in a note on the Account of his Life; and to add such notices as I have obtained relative either to him or his friends, since that Account was printed off; to which the present article is intended as a supplement.

The words in our poet's will, "Provided that if such husband as she shall at the end of the said three years be married unto," &c. seemed to me to afford a presumptive proof that Shakspeare, when he made his will, did not know of the marriage of his daughter Judith, (the person there spoken of,) which had been celebrated about a month before: a circumstance, however, which, even when I stated it, appeared to me very extraordinary, and highly improbable. On further consideration I am convinced that I was mistaken, and that the words above-cited were intended to comprehend her then husband, and any other to whom within three years she might be married. The word *discharge* in the bequest to Judith, which had escaped my notice,—“One hundred pounds in discharge of her marriage portion,”—shews that he must have been apprized of this marriage, and that he had previously *covenanted* to give her that sum.

In the transcript of the instrument by which a coat of arms was granted in 1599 to John Shakspeare, our poet's father⁶, the original has been followed with a scrupulous fidelity; but on perusing the rough draughts of the former grant of arms in 1596, I am satisfied that there is an error in the latter grant, in which the following unintelligible paragraph is found:

“Wherefore being solicited, and by credible report informed, that John Shakspeare, now of Stratford-upon-Avon
great grandfather

late
in the counte of Warwick, gent. whose parent a and a antecessor for his faithfull and approved service to the late most
prudent

⁶ Vol. I. p. 152.

prudent prince, king Henry VII. of famous memorie, was advaunced with lands and tenements, geven to him in those parts of Warwickshire, where they have continewed by some descents in good reputation and credit," &c.

On reviewing this instrument, it appeared not very easy to ascertain who the person here alluded to was, if only one was meant; nor is it at all probable that the *great grandfather* of John Shakspeare should have been his late or immediate predecessor; to say nothing of the word *parent*, which, unless it means *relation* in general, is as unintelligible as the rest. On examining the two rough draughts of the grant of arms to John Shakspeare in 1596, I found that in one of these, (apparently the more perfect of the two,) the corresponding words run thus: "— whose *parents and late antecessors* were for their valour and faithful services to the late most prudent prince king Henry VII." &c. In the other thus: "— whose *parents* [and] late antecessors for their faithful and valiant service," &c. The word *their* is in this paper obliterated, and *his* written over it; and over *antecessors* the word *grandfather* is written. The draughtsman however forgot to draw a line through the word for which *grandfather* was to be substituted. He evidently was in doubt which of the two expressions he should retain; but we may presume he meant to reject the words "— whose *parents and late antecessors*," and to substitute instead of them, "— whose *grandfather for his*," &c.

In the grant of 1599, we have seen, the words originally stood, "— whose *parent and antecessor was*," and the words *great grandfather* and *late* are interlineations. The writer forgot to erase the original words, but undoubtedly he did not mean that both those and the substituted words should be retained, but that the paragraph should stand thus: "— whose *great grandfather for his faithful and approved service*," &c. and, instead of "*great grandfather*," the earlier instrument induces me to think that he ought to have written, "— whose *late grandfather*."

A minute examination of these instruments led me to inquire what grounds the heralds had for their assertion that our poet's ancestor had been rewarded by a grant of lands from king Henry the Seventh. But it should seem that they were satisfied with very slight evidence of this fact; for after a very careful examination in the chapel of the Rolls ⁷/₃ from the

⁷ I cannot omit this opportunity of acknowledging the politeness of Mr. Kipling of the Rolls-office, who permitted every examination which I desired, to be made in the venerable repository under his care; and, with

the beginning to the end of that reign, it appears, that no such grant was made. If any such had been made by that king, out of the forfeited estates of the adherents of king Richard the Third, or otherwise, it must have passed the great seal, and would have been on record. As therefore it is not found on the rolls, we may be assured that no such grant was made. However, from the words of the early instruments in the heralds-office, which have been already quoted, "— for his faithful and *valiant* service," &c. it is highly probable, that our poet's great grandfather distinguished himself in Bosworth field on the side of king Henry, and that he was rewarded for his military services by the bounty of that parsimonious prince, though not with a grant of lands.

Mr. Rowe in his account of our poet's father has said that he had ten children. From the Register of the parish of Stratford-upon-Avon it appears, that ten children of John Shakspeare were baptized there between the year 1558, when the register commenced, and the year 1591. If therefore they were all the children of our poet's father, Mr. Rowe's account is inaccurate; for our poet had a sister named Margaret, born before the commencement of the Register. It is, however, extremely improbable, that in so numerous a family not one of the sons should have been baptized by the christian name of old Mr. Shakspeare. I now therefore believe (though I was formerly of a different opinion) that our poet's eldest brother bore his father's christian name, *John*; and that, like their eldest sister, Margaret, he was born before the register commenced. If this was the case, then without doubt the three children who were born between March 1588 and September 1591, Ursula, Humphrey, and Philip, were the issue of this younger John, by his second wife, whose christian name was Mary; and the real number of the children of our poet's father was *nine*. This Mary Shakspeare died in 1608, and is described as a widow. If therefore she was the wife of John Shakspeare the younger, then must he have died before that year.

About twenty years ago, one Mosely, a master-bricklayer, who usually worked with his men, being employed by Mr. Thomas Hart, the fifth descendant in a direct line from our poet's sister, Joan Hart, to new-tile the old house at Stratford in which Mr. Hart lives, and in which our poet was born,

with a liberality seldom found in publick offices, would not accept of the accustomed fee, for any search which tended to throw a light on the history of our great dramattick poet.

born, found a very extraordinary manuscript between the rafters and the tiling of the house. It is a small paper-book consisting of five leaves stitched together. It had originally consisted of six leaves, but unluckily the first was wanting when the book was found. I have taken some pains to ascertain the authenticity of this manuscript, and after a very careful inquiry am perfectly satisfied that it is genuine.

The writer, John Shakspeare, calls it his *Will*; but it is rather a declaration of his faith and pious resolutions. Whether it contains the religious sentiments of our poet's father or elder brother, I am unable to determine. The handwriting is undoubtedly not so ancient as that *usually* written about the year 1600; but I have now before me a manuscript written by Alleyn the player at various times between 1599 and 1614, and another by Forde, the dramattick poet, in 1606, in nearly the same handwriting as that of the manuscript in question. The Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, at my request endeavoured to find out Mr. Moseley, to examine more particularly concerning this manuscript; but he died about two years ago. His daughter, however, who is now living, and Mr. Hart, who is also living and now sixty years old, perfectly well remember the finding of this paper. Moseley some time after he had found it, gave it to Mr. Peyton, an alderman of Stratford, who obligingly transmitted it to me through the hands of Mr. Davenport. It is proper to observe that the finder of this relique bore the character of a very honest, sober, industrious man, and that he neither asked nor received any price for it; and I may also add that its contents are such as no one could have thought of inventing with a view to literary imposition.

If the injunction contained in the latter part of it (that it should be buried with the writer) was observed, then must the paper which has thus fortuitously been recovered, have been a copy, made from the original, previous to the burial of John Shakspeare.

This extraordinary will consisted originally of fourteen articles, but the first leaf being unluckily wanting, I am unable to ascertain either its date or the particular occasion on which it was written; both of which probably the first article would have furnished us with. If it was written by our poet's father, John Shakspeare, then it was probably drawn up about the year 1600; if by his brother, it perhaps was dated some time between that year and 1608, when the younger John should seem to have been dead.

III.

" * * * * at least spiritually, in will adoring and most humbly beseeching my saviour, that he will be pleased to assist me in so dangerous a voyage, to defend me from the snares and deceites of my infernall enemies, and to conduct me to the secure haven of his eternall blisse.

IV.

Item, I John Shakspear doe protest that I will also passe out of this life, armed with the last sacrament of extreme unction: the which if through any let or hindrance I should not then be able to have, I doe now also for that time demand and crave the same; beseeching his divine majesty that he will be pleased to anoynt my senses both internall and externall with the sacred oyle of his infinite mercy, and to pardon me all my sins committed by seeing, speaking, feeling, smelling, hearing, touching, or by any other way whatsoever.

V.

Item, I John Shakspear doe by this present protest that I will never through any temptation whatsoever despaire of the divine goodness, for the multitude and greatness of my finnes; for which although I confesse that I have deserved hell, yet will I stedfastly hope in gods infinite mercy, knowing that he hath heretofore pardoned many as great sinners as myself, whereof I have good warrant sealed with his sacred mouth, in holy writ, whereby he pronounceth that he is not come to call the just, but sinners.

VI.

Item, I John Shakspear do protest that I do not know that I have ever done any good worke meritorious of life everlasting: and if I have done any, I do acknowledge that I have done it with a great deale of negligence and imperfection; neither should I have been able to have done the least without the assistance of his divine grace. Wherefore let the devill remain confounded; for I doe in no wise presume to merit heaven by such good workes alone, but through the merits and blood of my lord and saviour, jesus, shed upon the crosse for me most miserable sinner.

VII.

" *Item*, I John Shakspear do protest by this present writing, that I will patiently endure and suffer all kind of infirmity, sickness, yea and the paine of death it self: wherein if it should happen, which god forbid, that through violence of paine and agony, or by subtilty of the devill, I should fall into any impatience or temptation of blasphemy, or murmuration against god, or the catholike faith, or give any
signe

signe of bad example, I do henceforth, and for that present, repent me, and am most heartily sorry for the same: and I do renounce all the evill whatsoever, which I might have then done or said; beseeching his divine clemency that he will not forsake me in that grievous and paignefull agony.

VIII.

Item, I John Shakspear, by virtue of this present testament, I do pardon all the injuries and offences that any one hath ever done unto me, either in my reputation, life, goods, or any other way whatsoever; beseeching sweet jesus to pardon them for the same: and I do desire, that they will doe the like by me, whome I have offended or injured in any sort howsoever.

IX.

Item, I John Shakspear do heere protest that I do render infinite thanks to his divine majesty for all the benefits that I have received as well secret as manifest, & in particular, for the benefit of my Creation, Redemption, Sanctification, Conservation, and Vocation to the holy knowledge of him and his true Catholike faith: but above all, for his so great expectation of me to pennance, when he might most justly have taken me out of this life, when I least thought of it, yea even then, when I was plunged in the durty puddle of my finnes. Blessed be therefore and praised, for ever and ever, his infinite patience and charity.

X.

Item, I John Shakspear do protest, that I am willing, yea, I doe infinitely desire and humbly crave, that of this my last will and testament the glorious and ever Virgin mary, mother of god, refuge and advocate of sinners, (whom I honour specially above all other saints) may be the chiefe Executresse, togeather with these other saints, my patrons, (saint Winefride) all whome I invoke and beseech to be present at the hour of my death, that she and they may comfort me with their desired presence, and crave of sweet Jesus that he will receive my soul into peace.

XI.

Item, In virtue of this present writing, I John Shakspear do likewise most willingly and with all humility constitute and ordaine my good Angel, for Defender and Protector of my soul in the dreadfull day of Judgement, when the finall sentance of eternall life or death shall be discussed and given; beseeching him, that, as my soule was appointed to his custody and protection when I lived, even so he will vouchsafe to defend the same at that houre, and conduct it to eternall blifs.

XII.

XII.

Item, I John Shakspear do in like manner pray and beseech all my dear friends, parents, and kinsfolks, by the bowels of our Saviour jesus Christ, that since it is uncertain what lot will befall me, for fear notwithstanding least by reason of my sinnes I be to pass and stay a long while in purgatory, they will vouchsafe to assist and succour me with their holy prayers and satisfactory workes, especially with the holy sacrifice of the masse, as being the most effectuall meanes to deliver soules from their torments and paines; from the which, if I shall by gods gracious goodnesse and by their vertuous workes be delivered, I do promise that I will not be ungrateful unto them, for so great a benefitt.

XIII.

Item, I John Shakspear doe by this my last will and testament bequeath my soul, as soon as it shall be delivered and loosened from the prison of this my body, to be entombed in the sweet and amorous coffin of the side of jesus Christ; and that in this life-giving sepulcher it may rest and live, perpetually inclosed in that eternall habitation of repose, there to blesse for ever and ever that direfull iron of the lance, which, like a charge in a censore, formes so sweet and pleasant a monument within the sacred breast of my lord and saviour.

XIV.

Item, lastly I John Shakspear doe protest, that I will willingly accept of death in what manner soever it may befall me, conforming my will unto the will of god; accepting of the same in satisfaction for my sinnes, and giving thanks unto his divine majesty for the life he hath bestowed upon me. And if it please him to prolong or shorten the same, blessed be he also a thousand thousand times; into whose most holy hands I commend my soul and body, my life and death: and I beseech him above all things, that he never permit any change to be made by me John Shakspear of this my aforesaid will and testament. Amen.

"I John Shakspear have made this present writing of protestation, confession, and charter, in presence of the blessed virgin mary, my Angell guardian, and all the Celestial Court, as witnesses hereunto: the which my meaning is, that it be of full value now presently and for ever, with the force and vertue of testament, codicill, and donation in cause of death; confirming it anew, being in perfect health of soul and body, and signed with mine own hand; carrying also the same about me; and for the better declaration hereof, my will

will and intention is that it be finally buried with me after my death.

“ Pater noster, Ave maria, Credo.

“ jesu, son of David, have mercy on me.

“ Amen.”

Since my remarks on the epitaph said to have been made by Shakspeare on John o'Comb, were printed, it occurred to me, that the manuscript papers of Mr. Aubrey, preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, might throw some light on that subject. Mr. Aubrey was born in the year 1625, or 1626; and in 1642 was entered a gentleman commoner of Trinity college in Oxford. Four years afterwards he was admitted a member of the Inner Temple, and in 1662 elected a member of the Royal Society. He died about the year 1700. It is acknowledged, that his literary attainments were considerable; that he was a man of good parts, of much learning and great application; a good Latin poet, an excellent naturalist, and, what is more material to our present object, a great lover of and indefatigable searcher into antiquities. That the greater part of his life was devoted to literary pursuits, is ascertained by the works which he has published, the correspondence which he held with many eminent men, and the collections which he left in manuscript, and which are now repositied in the Ashmolean Museum. Among these collections is a curious account of our English poets and many other writers. While Wood was preparing his *Athenae Oxonienses*, this manuscript was lent to him, as appears from many queries in his handwriting in the margin; and his account of Milton, with whom Aubrey was intimately acquainted, is (as has been observed by Mr. Warton) literally transcribed from thence. Wood afterwards quarreled with Mr. Aubrey, whom in the second volume of his *Fasts*, p. 262, he calls his *friend*, and on whom in his History of the University of Oxford he bestows the highest encomium*; and, after their quarrel, with his usual warmth, and in his loose diction, he represented Aubrey as “ a pretender to antiquities, roving, magottie-headed, and little better than crased.” To Wood every lover of antiquity and literary history has very high obligations; and in all matters of fact he may

* “ Transmissum autem nobis est illud epitaphium a viro perhumano, Johanne Alberico, vulgo Aubrey, Armigero, hujus collegii olim generoso commensali, jam vero e Regia Societate, Londini; viro inquam, tam bono, tam benigno, ut publico solum commodo, nec sibi omnino, natus esse videatur. *Hist. et Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* l. ii. p. 297.

may be safely relied on; but his opinion of men and things is of little value. According to his representation, Dr. Ralph Bathurst, a man highly esteemed by all his contemporaries, was "a most vile person," and the celebrated John Locke, "a prating, clamorous, turbulent fellow." The virtuous and learned Dr. John Wallis, if we are to believe Wood, was a man who could "at any time make black white, and white black, for his own ends, and who had a ready knack at sophistical evasion⁸." How little his judgment of his contemporaries is to be trusted, is also evinced by his account of the ingenious Dr. South, whom, being offended by one of his witticisms, he has grossly reviled⁹. Whatever Wood in a peevish humour may have thought or said of Mr. Aubrey, by whose labours he highly profited, or however fantastical Aubrey may have been on the subject of chemistry and ghosts, his character for veracity has never been impeached; and as a very diligent antiquarian, his testimony is worthy of attention. Mr. Toland, who was well acquainted with him, and certainly a better judge of men than Wood, gives this character of him: "Though he was extremely superstitious, or seemed to be so, yet HE WAS A VERY HONEST MAN, AND MOST ACCURATE IN HIS ACCOUNT OF MATTERS OF FACT. But the facts he knew, not the reflections he made, were what I wanted." I do not wish to maintain that all his accounts of our English writers are on these grounds to be implicitly adopted; but it seems to me much more reasonable to question such parts of them as seem objectionable, than to reject them altogether, because he may sometimes have been mistaken.

He was acquainted with many of the players, and lived in great intimacy with the poets and other celebrated writers of the last age; from whom undoubtedly many of his anecdotes were collected. Among his friends and acquaintances we find

Hobbes,

⁸ Letter from Wood to Aubrey, dated Jan. 16. 1689-90. Mss. Aubrey. No. 15, in Mus. Ashmol. Oxon.—Yet in the preface to his *History of the University of Oxford*, he describes Dr. Wallis as a man—"eruditione pariter et humanitate præstans."

⁹ "Wood's account of South (says Mr. Warton) is full of malicious reflections and abusive stories: the occasion of which was this. Wood, on a visit to Dr. South, was complaining of a very painful and dangerous suppression of urine; upon which South in his witty manner, told him, that, 'if he could not *make water* he must *make earth*.' Wood was so provoked at this unseasonable and unexpected jest, that he went home in a passion, and wrote South's *Life*." *Life of Ralph Bathurst*, p. 184. Compare Wood's *Athen. Oxon.* II. 1041.

¹ Specimen of a critical history of the Celtick religion, &c. p. 122.

Hobbes, Milton, Dryden, Ray, Evelyn², Ashmole, Sir William Dugdale, Dr. Bathurst, Bishop Skinner, Dr. Gale, Sir John Denham, Sir Bennet Hoskyns, (son of John Hoskyns, who was well acquainted with the poets of Shakspeare's time,) Mr. Josiah Howe, Toland, and many more³. The anecdotes concerning D'Avenant in Wood's *Albena Oxoniensis*, which have been printed in a former page⁴, were, like the copious and accurate account of Milton, transcribed literally from Aubrey's papers. What has been there suggested, (that D'Avenant was Shakspeare's son) is confirmed by a subsequent passage in the Ms. which has been imperfectly obliterated, and which Wood did not print, though in one of his own unpublished manuscripts now in the Bodleian library he has himself told the same story. The line which is imperfectly obliterated in a different ink, and therefore probably by another hand than that of Aubrey, tells us, (as Mr. Warton who has been able to trace the words through the obliteration, informs me,) that D'Avenant was Shakspeare's son by the hostess of the Crown inn. The remainder of the context confirms this; for it says, that "D'Avenant was proud of being thought so, and had often (in his cups) owned the report to be true, to Butler the poet." — From Dr. Bathurst, Sir Bennet Hoskyns, Lacy the player, and others, Aubrey got some anecdotes of Ben Jonson, which, as this part of the manuscript has not been published, I shall give below⁵; and from Dryden and Mr. William Beeston, (son of Christopher Beeston, Shakspeare's fellow-comedian, who was a long time manager of the Cockpit playhouse in Drury-lane,) some particulars concerning Spenser. I mention these circumstances only to shew that Aubrey was a curious and diligent inquirer, at a time when such inquiries were likely to be attended with success.

Dr. Farmer

² "With incredible satisfaction I have perused your Natural History of the county of Surrey, and greatly admire both your industry in undertaking so profitable a work, and your judgment in the several observations you have made." Letter from John Evelyn, Esq. to Mr. Aubrey, prefixed to his *Antiquities of Surrey*.

³ Hobbes, whose life Aubrey wrote, was born in 1588, Milton in 1608, Dryden in 1630, Ray in 1628, Evelyn in 1621, Ashmole in 1616, Sir W. Dugdale in 1606, Dr. Bathurst in 1620, Bishop Skinner in 1591, Dr. Gale about 1630, Sir John Denham in 1615, Sir Bennet Hoskyns (the son of John Hoskyns, Ben Jonson's poetical father, who was born in 1566,) about 1600, and Mr. Jos. Howe in 1611.

⁴ Vol. I. p. 133. n. 6.

⁵ The article relative to this poet immediately precedes that of Shakspeare, and is as follows:

Dr. Farmer in his admirable *Essay on the Rarings of Shakespeare*, by which, as Dr. Johnson justly observed, "the question is for ever decided," has given an extract from Mr. Aubrey's account of our poet, and the part which he has quoted

"MR. BENJAMIN JOHNSON, Poet Laureat.

"I remember when I was a scholar at Trin. Coll. Oxon. 1646, I heard Mr. Ralph Bathurst [now Dean of Wells] say, that Ben. Johnson was a Warwyckshire man. 'Tis agreed, that his father was a minister; and by his Epistle DD of *Every Man* — to Mr. W. Camden, that he was a Westminster scholar; and that Mr. W. Camden was his school-master. His mother, after his father's death, married a bricklayer, and 'tis g'rally sayd that he wrought some time with his father-in-law; & p'ticularly on the garden wall of Lincoln's inne next to Chancery lane; & that a knight, a bencher, walking thro, and hearing him repeat some Greeke verses out of Homer, discoursing with him & finding him to have a witt extraordinary, gave him some exhibition to maintain him at Trinity College in Cambridge, where he was —: then he went into the Lowe countreys, and spent some time, not very long, in the armie; not to the disgrace of [it], as you may find in his Epigrams. Then he came into England, & acted & wrote at the Green Curtaine, but both ill; a kind of Nursery or obscure play-house somewhere in the suburbs (I think towards Shoreditch or Clarkenwell). Then he undertooke againe to write a play, & did hit it admirably well, viz. *Every Man* — which was his first good one. Sergeant Jo. Hoskins of Herefordshire was his *Father*. I remember his sonne (Sir Bennet Hoskins, Baronet, who was something poetical in his youth) told me, that when he desired to be adopted his sonne, No, sayd he, 'tis honour enough for me to be your brother: I am your father's sonne: 'twas he that polish'd me: I doe acknowledge it. He was [or rather had been] of a clear and faire skin. His habit was very plain. I have heard Mr. Lacy the player say, that he was wont to weare a coate like a coachman's coate, with slits under the arm-pits. He would many times exceede in drinke: Canarie was his beloved liquour: then he would tumble home to bed; & when he had thoroughly perspired, then to studie. I have seen his studying chaire, which was of strawe, such as old women used, & as Aulus Gellius is drawn in. When I was in Oxon: Bishop Skinner [Bp. of Oxford] who lay at our coll: was wont to say, that he understood an author as well as any man in England. He mentions in his Epigrams, a sonne that he had, and his epitaph. Long since in King James time, I have heard my uncle Davers [Danvers] say, who knew him, that he lived withoute temple barre at a combe-maker's shop about the Eleph.^{ca} Castle. In his later time he lived in Westminster, in the house under whiche you passe, as you goe out of the church-yard into the old palace: where he dyed. He lyes buried in the north aisse, the path of square stones, the rest is luzenge, opposite to the scutcheon of Robertus de Ros, with this inscription only on him, in a pavement square of blew marble, 14 inches square, O RARE BEN: IONSON: which was donne at the charge of Jack Young, afterwards knighted, who walking there, when the grave was covering, gave the fellow eighteen pence to cutt it."

It is observable that none of the biographers of the last age, but Aubrey, appear to have known that Jonson went to the Low Countries,

quoted has been printed in a former page⁶: but as the manuscript memoir is more copious, and the account given by Aubrey of our poet's verses on John o'Combe, (which has never been published) is materially different from that transmitted by Mr. Rowe, I shall give an exact transcript of the whole article relative to Shakspeare from the original.

MS. Aubrey. Mus. ASHMOL. Oxon. *Lives*,
P. I. fol. 78. a. [Inter Cod. Dugdal.]

MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

" William Shakspeare's father was a butcher, and I have been told heretofore by some of the neighbours, that when he was a boy, he exercised his father's trade; but when he killed

in his younger years; a fact which is confirmed by the conversation that passed between old Ben and Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, which was not published till eleven years after Mr. Aubrey's death. A long account of Serjeant John Hoskyns, and Skinner, bishop of Oxford, may be found in Wood's *Atben. Oxon.* I. 1614—II. 1136.

Not knowing that this poet had a son who arrived at man's estate, I had no doubt that the reversionary grant of the office of Master of the Revels, which I found in the chapel of the Rolls, was made to old Ben; [see Vol. I. p. 333.] but I am now convinced that I was mistaken, and that this grant was made either to his son, Benjamin Jonson the younger, who was also a poet, though he has not been noticed by any of our biographical writers, or to some other person of the same name. A paper which has lately fallen into my hands, pointed out my mistake. It appears that Sir Henry Herbert soon after the Restoration brought an action on the case against Mr. Betterton, for the injury Sir Henry suffered by the performance of plays without the accustomed fees being paid to the Master of the Revels. On the trial it was necessary for him to establish his title to that office; and as the grant made to him was not to take effect till after either the death, resignation, forfeiture, or surrender of Benjamin Jonson and Sir John Astley, it became necessary to shew that those two persons were dead: and accordingly it was proved on the trial that the said Benjamin Jonson died, Nov. 20, 1635. The poet-laureat died, August 16, 1637. The younger Jonson was a dramatick author, having in conjunction with Brome, produced a play called *A Fault in Friendship*, which was acted at the Curtain by the Prince's company in October, 1623; and in 1672 a collection of his poems was published. To this volume are prefixed verses addressed "to all the ancient family of the *Lucys*," in which the writer describes himself as "a little stream from that clear spring:" a circumstance which adds support to Dr. Bathurst's account of his father's birth-place. It should seem that he was not on good terms with his father. "He was not very happy in his children, (says Fuller in his account of Ben Jonson,) and most happy in those which died first, though none lived to survive him."

⁶ Vol. I. p. 138. Dr. Farmer supposed that Aubrey's anecdotes of Shakspeare came originally from Mr. Beeston, but this is a mistake. Mr. Beeston is quoted by Aubrey only for some particulars relative to Spenser.

killed a calfe, he would do it in a *high style*, and make a speech. This William, being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, came to London, I guesse about 18, and was an actor at one of the playhouses, and did act exceedingly well. Now Ben Johnson was never a good actor, but an excellent instructor. He began early to make essays in dramatique poetry, which at that time was very lowe, and his plays took well. He was a handsome well shaped man; verie good company, and of a very ready, and pleasant, and smooth witt. The humour of the constable in a *Midsummer-night Dreame* he happened to take at Crendon in Bucks, (I think it was Midsummer-night that he happened to be there;) which is the road from London to Stratford; and there was living that constable about 1642, when I came first to Oxon. Mr. Jos. Howe is of the parish, and knew him. Ben Johnson and he did gather humours of men, wherever they came. One time as he was at the taverne at Stratford, Mr. Combes, an old usurer, was to be buryed; he makes then this extemporary epitaph upon him:

"Ten in the hundred the Devill allowes,

"But Combes will have twelve, he swears and he vowes:

"If any one aske who lies in this tomb,

"Hoh! quoth the Devill, 'tis my John o'Combe.

"He was wont to go to his native country once a yeare, I think I have been told that he left near 300l. to a sister. He understood latin pretty well; for he had been in his younger yeares a school-master in the country."

Let us now proceed to examine the several parts of this account.

The first assertion, that our poet's father was a butcher, has been thought unworthy of credit, because "not only contrary to all other tradition, but, as it may seem, to the instrument in the heralds-office," which may be found in a former page. But for my own part, I think, this assertion, (which it should be observed is positively affirmed on the information of his neighbours, procured probably at an early period,) and the received account of his having been a wool-tapler, by no means inconsistent. Dr. Farmer has illustrated a passage in *Hamlet* from information derived from a person who was at once a wool-man and butcher; and, I believe, few occupations can be named, which are more naturally connected with each other. Mr. Rowe first mentioned the tradition that our poet's father was a dealer in wool, and his account is corroborated by a circumstance which I have just now learned. In one of the windows of a building in Stratford

which belonged to the Shakspeare family, are the arms of the merchants of the staple;—*Nebule, on a chief gules, a lion passant, or;* and the same arms, I am told, may be observed in the church at Stratford, in the fret-work over the arch which covers the tomb of John de Clopton, who was a merchant of the staple, and father of Sir Hugh Clopton, lord-mayor of London, by whom the bridge over the Avon was built. But it should seem from the records of Stratford that John Shakspeare, about the year 1579, at which time our poet was fifteen years old, was by no means in affluent circumstances; and why may we not suppose that at that period he endeavoured to support his numerous family by adding the trade of a butcher to that of his principal business; though at a subsequent period he was enabled, perhaps by his son's bounty, to discontinue the less respectable of these occupations? I do not however, think it at all probable, that a person who had been once bailiff of Stratford should have suffered any of his children to have been employed in the servile office of killing calves.

Mr. Aubrey proceeds to tell us, that William Shakspeare came to London and began his theatrical career, according to his conjecture, when he was about eighteen years old;—but as his merit as an actor is the principal object of our present disquisition, I shall postpone my observations on this paragraph, till the remaining part of these anecdotes has been considered.

We are next told, that “he began early to make essays in dramatick poetry, which at that time was very lowe, and his playes took well.”

On these points, I imagine, there cannot be much variety of opinion. Mr. Aubrey was undoubtedly mistaken in his conjecture, (for he gives it only as conjecture,) that our poet came to London at eighteen; for as he had three children born at Stratford in 1583, and 1584, it is very improbable that he should have left his native town before the latter year. I think it most probable that he did not come to London before the year 1586, when he was twenty-two years old. When he produced his first play, has not been ascertained; but if Spenser alludes to him in his *Tears of the Muses*, Shakspeare must have exhibited some piece in or before 1590, at which time he was twenty six years old; and though many have written for the publick before they had attained that time of life, any theatrical performance produced at that age would I think, sufficiently justify Mr. Aubrey in saying that he began *early* to make essays in dramatick poetry. In a word,

word,

word, we have no *proof* that he did *not* woo the dramatick Muse, even so early as in the year 1587 or 1588; in the first of which years he was but twenty three; and therefore till such proof shall be produced, Mr. Aubrey's assertion, founded apparently on the information of those who lived very near the time, is entitled to some weight.

"He was a handsome well-shaped man, verie good company, and of a very ready, and pleasant, and smooth witt."

I suppose none of my readers will find any difficulty in giving full credit to this part of the account. Mr. Aubrey, I believe, is the only writer, who has particularly mentioned the beauty of our poet's person; and there being no contradictory testimony on the subject, he may here be safely relied on. All his contemporaries who have spoken of him, concur in celebrating the gentleness of his manners, and the readiness of his wit. "As he was a happy imitator of nature, (say his fellow comedians,) so was he a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together; and what he thought he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers." "My gentle Shakspeare," is the compellation used to him by Ben Jonson. "He was indeed (says his old antagonist) *honest, and of an open and free nature*; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped. *Suffraginandus erat*, as Augustus said of Harterius." So also in his verses on our poet:

"——— Look how the father's face

"Lives in his issue, even so the race

"Of Shakspeare's *mind and manners* brightly shines

"In his *well-torned and true-filed* lines."

In like manner he is represented by Spenser (if in the *Teares of the Muses* he is alluded to, which, it must be acknowledged, is extremely probable,) under the endearing description of "our pleasant Willy," and "that same gentle spirit, from whose pen flow copious streams of honey and nectar." In a subsequent page I shall have occasion to quote another of his contemporaries, who is equally lavish in praising the uprightness of his conduct and the gentleness and civility of his demeanor. And conformable to all these ancient testimonies is that of Mr. Rowe, who informs us, from the traditional accounts received from his native town, that our poet's "pleasurable wit and good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance

quaintance and entitled him to the friendship of the gentlemen of his neighbourhood at Stratford."

A man, whose manners were thus engaging, whose wit was thus ready, and whose mind was stored with such a plentitude of ideas and such a copious assemblage of images as his writings exhibit, could not but have been what he is represented by Mr. Aubrey, a delightful companion.

"The humour of the constable in *A Midsummer-night's Dream*, he happened to take at Crendon in Buck, (I think it was Midsummer-night that he happened to be there;) which is the road from London to Stratford; and there was living that constable about 1642, when I came first to Oxon. Mr. Jos. Howe is of the parish, and knew him."

It must be acknowledged that there is here a slight mistake, there being no such character as a constable in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. The person in contemplation undoubtedly was DOGBERRY in *Much ado about nothing*. But this mistake of a name does not, in my apprehension, detract in the smallest degree from the credit of the fact itself; namely, that our poet in his admirable character of a foolish constable had in view an individual who lived in Crendon or Grendon, (for it is written both ways,) a town in Buckinghamshire, about thirteen miles from Oxford. Leonard Digges, who was Shakspeare's contemporary, has fallen into a similar error; for in his eulogy on our poet, he has supposed the character of MALVOLIO, which is found in *Twelfth Night*, to be in *Much ado about nothing*⁸.

As some account of the person from whom Mr. Aubrey derived this anecdote, who was of the same college with him at Oxford, may tend to establish its credit, I shall transcribe from Mr. Warton's preface to his *Life of Sir Thomas Pope*, such notices of Mr. Josias Howe, as he has been able to recover.

"He was born at Crendon in Bucks, [about the year 1611] and elected a scholar of Trinity College June 12, 1632; admitted a fellow, being then bachelor of arts, May 26, 1637. By Hearne he is called a great cavalier and loyalist, and a most ingenious man⁹. He appears to have been a general and accomplished scholar, and in polite literature one of the ornaments of the university.—In 1644, he preached before king Charles the First, at Christ Church cathedral, Oxford. The sermon was printed, and in red letters, by his majesty's special command.—Soon after 1646, he was ejected from his fellowship by the presbyterians; and restored

in

⁸ See Vol. I. p. 179.

⁹ Rob. Glouc. Gloss. p. 669.

in 1660. He lived forty-two years, greatly respected, after his restitution, and arriving at the age of ninety, died fellow of the college where he constantly resided, August 28, 1701." Mr. Thomas Howe, the father of this Mr. Josias Howe, (as I learn from Wood) was minister of Crendon, and contemporary with Shakspeare; and from him his son perhaps derived some information concerning our poet, which he might have communicated to his fellow collegian, Aubrey. The anecdote relative to the constable of Crendon, however, does not stand on this ground, for we find that Mr. Josias Howe personally knew him, and that he was living in 1642.

I now proceed to the remaining part of these anecdotes:

"Ben Jonson and he did gather humours of men wherever they came. One time as he was at the tavern at Stratford, Mr. Combes', an old usurer, was to be buried¹; he makes then this extemporary epitaph upon him:

"Ten in the hundred the devill allowes,

"But Combes will have twelve, he swears and he vowes:

"If any one aske', who lies in this tomb,

"Hoh! quoth the devill, 'tis my John o'Combe."

In a former page I have proved, if I mistake not, from an examination of Mr. Combe's will, and other circumstances, that no credit is due to Mr. Rowe's account of our poet's having so incensed him by an epitaph which he made on him in his presence, at a tavern in Stratford, that the old gentleman never forgave him. And Mr. Aubrey's account of this matter, which I had not then seen, fully confirms what I suggested on the subject: for here we find, that the epitaph was made after Combe's death. Nor is this sprightly effusion inconsistent

¹ Th's custom of adding an s to many names, both in speaking and writing, was very common in the last age. Shakspeare's fellow comedian, *John Heminge*, was always called Mr. *Hemings* by his contemporaries, and Lord Clarendon constantly writes Bishop *Earles*, instead of Bishop *Earle*.

"S (says Camden in his *Remaines*, 4to 1605,) also is joyned to most [names] now, as Manors, Knoles, Crofts, Hilles, *Combes*," &c.

² Mr. Combe was buried at Stratford, July 12, 1614. The entry in the Register of that parish confirms the observation made above; for, though written by a clergyman, it stands thus: "July 12, 1614. Mr. John *Combes*, Gener."

³ This appears to have been in our poet's time a common form in writing epitaphs. In one which he wrote on Sir Thomas Stanley, which has been given in Vol. I. Part I. p. 130, we again meet with it:

"*Ask, who lies here,*" &c.

Again, in Ben Jonson's Epitaph on his son:

"Rest in soft peace, and *ask'd*, say, *here doth lie*

"Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry."

consistent with Shakspeare's having lived in a certain degree of familiarity with that gentleman, whom he might have respected for some qualities, though he indulged himself in a sudden and playful censure of his inordinate attention to the acquirement of wealth, at a time when that ridicule could not affect him who was the object of it.

Mr. Steevens has justly observed, that the verses exhibited by Mr. Rowe, contain not a jocular epitaph, but a malevolent prediction; and every reader will, I am sure, readily agree with him, that it is extremely improbable that Shakspeare should have poisoned the hour of confidence and friendship by producing one of the severest censures on one of his company, and so wantonly and publicly express his doubts concerning the salvation of one of his fellow creatures. The foregoing more accurate statement entirely vindicates our poet from this imputation.

These extemporary verses having, I suppose, not been set down in writing by their author, and being inaccurately transmitted to London, appear in an entirely different shape in *Braithwaite's Remains*, and there we find them affixed to a tomb erected by Mr. Combe in his life-time. I have already shewn that no such tomb was erected by Mr. Combe, and therefore Braithwaite's story is as little to be credited as Mr. Rowe's. That such various representations should be made of verses of which the author probably never gave a written copy, and perhaps never thought of after he had uttered them, is not at all extraordinary. Who has not, in his own experience, met with similar variations in the accounts of a transaction which passed but a few months before he had occasion to examine minutely and accurately into the real state of the fact?

In further support of Mr. Aubrey's exhibition of these verses, it may be observed, that in his copy the first couplet is original; in Mr. Rowe's exhibition of them it is borrowed from preceding epitaphs. In the fourth line, *Ho* (not *Oh*, as Mr. Rowe has it,) was in Shakspeare's age the appropriate exclamation of *ROBIN GOODFELLOW, alias PUCKE, alias HOBOGBLIN*.*

Mr. Aubrey informs us lastly, that Shakspeare "was wont to go to his native country once a year. I think I have been told that he left near 300l. to a sister. He understood Latin pretty well, for he had been in his younger years a school-master in the country."¹¹

Many traditional anecdotes, though not perfectly accurate, contain an adumbration of the truth. It is observable that

Mr. Aubrey

* See Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, Vol. III. p. 202.

Mr. Aubrey speaks here with some degree of doubt;—"I think I have been told;" and his memory, or that of his informer, led him into an error with respect to the person to whom our poet bequeathed this legacy; who, we find from his will, was his daughter, not his sister: but though Aubrey was mistaken as to the person, his information with respect to the amount of the legacy was perfectly correct; for 300*l.* was the precise sum which Shakspeare left to his second daughter, Judith.

In like manner, I am strongly inclined to think that the last assertion contains, though not the truth, yet something like it: I mean, that Shakspeare had been employed for some time in his younger years as a teacher in the country; though Dr. Farmer has incontestably proved, that he could not have been a teacher of *Latin*, I have already suggested my opinion, that before his coming to London he had acquired some share of legal knowledge in the office of a petty country conveyancer, or in that of the steward of some manorial court. It is not necessary here to repeat the reasons on which that opinion is founded. If he began to apply to this study at the age of eighteen, two years afterwards he might have been sufficiently conversant with conveyances to have taught others the forms of such legal assurances as are usually prepared by country attorneys; and perhaps spent two or three years in this employment before he removed from Stratford to London. Some uncertain rumour of this kind might have continued to the middle of the last century; and by the time it reached Mr. Aubrey, our poet's original occupation was changed from a scrivener's to that of a school-master.

I now proceed to the more immediate object of our present inquiry; our poet's merit as an actor.

"Being inclined naturally (says Mr. Aubrey) to poetry and acting, he came to London, I guess about 18, and was an actor at one of the playhouses, and did act exceedingly well. Now Ben Jonson never was a good actor, but an excellent instructor."

The first observation that I shall make on this account is, that the latter part of it, which informs us that Ben Jonson was a bad actor, is incontestably confirmed by one of the comedies of Decker; and therefore, though there were no other evidence, it might be plausibly inferred that Mr. Aubrey's information concerning our poet's powers on the stage was not less accurate. But in this instance I am not under the necessity of resting on such an inference; for I am able to produce the testimony of a contemporary in support of Shakspeare's histrionick merit. In the preface to a pamphlet

entitled *Kinde-Hartes-Dreame*, published in December 1592 which I have already had occasion to quote for another purpose, the author, Henry Chettle, who was himself a dramatick writer, and well acquainted with the principal poets and players of the time, thus speaks of Shakspeare :

“The other^s, whom at that time I did not so much spare, as since I wish I had, for that as I have moderated the hate of living writers, and might have used my own discretion, (especially in such a case, the author [Robert Green] being dead,) I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault; because my selfe have seen his demeanor no less civil than he EXCELLENT in the qualitie he professes: besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honestie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art.”

To those who are not conversant with the language of our old writers, it may be proper to observe, that the words, “*the qualitie he professes*,” particularly denote his profession as an actor. The latter part of the paragraph indeed, in which he is praised as a good man and an elegant writer, shews this: however, the following passage in Stephen Gosson’s *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, in which the very same words occur, will put this matter beyond a doubt. “Over-lashing in apparell (says Gosson) is so common a fault, that the verie hyerlings of some of our plaiers, which stand at the reversion of vi. s. by the weeke, jet under gentlemen’s noses in futes of silke, exercising themselves in prating on the stage, and common scoffing when they come abroad; where they looke askance at every man of whom the sonday before they begged an almes. I speak not this, as though every one that *professeth the qualitie*, so abused himselfe; for it is wel knownen, that some of them are sober, discreet, properly learned, honest householders, and citizens well thought on amonge their neighbours at home, though the pride of their shadows (I meane those hange-byes whome they succour with stipend) cause them to bee somewhat talked of abroad.”

Thus early was Shakspeare celebrated as an actor, and thus unfounded was the information which Mr. Rowe obtained on this subject. Wright, a more diligent inquirer, and who had better opportunities of gaining theatrical intelligence, had said about ten years before, that he had “heard our author

was

^s That by the words *The other*, was meant Shakspeare, has been already shewn in the *Essay on the order of his plays*, Vol. I. Part I. p. 274.

^o In the margin this cautious puritan adds — “Some players modest, if I be not deceived.”

was a better poet than an actor;" but this description, though probably true, may still leave him a considerable portion of merit in the latter capacity: for if the various powers and peculiar excellencies of all the actors from his time to the present were united in one man, it may well be doubted, whether they would constitute a performer whose merit should entitle him to "bench by the side" of Shakspeare as a poet.

A passage indeed in Lodge's *Incarnate Devils of the age*, 1596, has been pointed out, as levelled at our poet's performance of the Ghost in *Hamlet*. But this in my apprehension is a mistake. The ridicule intended to be conveyed by the passage in question was, I have no doubt, aimed at the actor who performed the part of the Ghost in some miserable play which was produced before Shakspeare commenced either actor or writer. That such a play once existed, I have already shewn to be highly probable; and the tradition transmitted by Betterton, that our poet's performance of the Ghost in his own *Hamlet* was his *chef d'oeuvre*, adds support to my opinion.

That Shakspeare had a perfect knowledge of his art, is proved by the instructions which are given to the player in *Hamlet*, and by other passages in his works; which, in addition to what I have already stated, incline me to think that the traditional account transmitted by Mr. Rowe, relative to his powers on the stage, has been too hastily credited. In the celebrated scene between Hamlet and his mother, she thus addresses him:

"—Alas, how is't with you?

"That you do bend your eye on vacancy,

"And with the incorporeal air do hold discourse?

"Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;

"And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,

"Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,

"Starts up, and stands on end.—Whereon do you look?

"*Ham.* On him! on him! look you, how pale he glares!

"His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,

"Would make them capable. Do not look upon me,

"Lest with this piteous action, you convert

"My stern effects: then what I have to do

"Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood."

Can it be imagined that he would have attributed these lines to Hamlet, unless he was confident that in his own
part

past he could give efficacy to that *pious action* of the Ghost which he has so forcibly described? or that the preceding lines spoken by the Queen, and the description of a tragedian in *King Richard III.* could have come from the pen of an ordinary actor?

- “ *Rich.* Come, cousin, can’st thou quake and change
thy colour?
“ *Murder thy breath in middle of a word?*
“ *And then again begin, and stop again,*
“ *As if thou wert distraught, and mad with terror?*
“ *Buck.* Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian;
“ *Speak, and look big, and pry on every side,*
“ *Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,*
“ *Intending deep suspicion: ghastly looks*
“ *Are at my service, like enforced smiles;*
“ *And both are ready in their offices,*
“ *At any time, to grace my stratagems.”*

I do not however, believe, that our poet played parts of the first rate, though he probably distinguished himself by whatever he performed. If the names of the actors prefixed to *Every Man in his humour* were arranged in the same order as the persons of the drama, he must have represented *Old Knowell*; and if we may give credit to an anecdote related in a former page, he was the *Adam* in his own *As you like it*. Perhaps he excelled in representing old men. The following contemptible lines written by a contemporary, about the year 1611, might lead us to suppose that he also acted Duncan in *Macbeth*, and the parts of King Henry the Fourth, and King Henry the Sixth:

- “ To our English Terence, Mr. William Shakspeare,
“ Some say, good Will, which I in sport do sing,
“ *Hadst thou not play’d some kingly parts in sport,*
“ *Thou hadst been a companion for a king,*
“ *And been a king among the meaner sort.*
“ Some others raile, but raile as they think fit,
“ *Thou hast no railing, but a reigning wit;*
“ *And honesty thou sow’st, which they do reape,*
“ *So to increase their flock which they do keepe.”*
The Scurge of Folly, by John Davies, of Hereford,
no date.

RICHARD

RICHARD BURBADGE*.

the most celebrated tragedian of our author's time, was the son of James Burbadge, who was also an actor, and perhaps a countryman of Shakspeare. He lived in Holywell-street in the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, from which circumstance I conjecture that he had originally played at the Curtain theatre, which was in that neighbourhood; for he does not appear to have been born in that parish; at least I searched the register from its commencement in 1558, in vain, for his birth. It is strange, however, that he should have continued to live from the year 1600 to his death, in a place which was near three miles distant from the Blackfriars play-house, and still further from the Globe, in which theatres he acted during the whole of that time. He appears to have married about the year 1600; and if at that time we suppose him thirty years old, his birth must be placed in 1570. By his wife, whose christian name was Winefrid, he had four daughters: Juliet, or Julia, (for the name is written both ways in the register,) who was baptized Jan. 2, 1602-3, and died in 1608; Frances, baptized Sep. 16, 1604; Winefrid, baptized Octob. 5, 1613, and buried in October, 1616; and a second Juliet, (or Julia,) who was baptized Dec. 26, 1614. This child and Frances appear to have survived their father. His fondness for the name of Juliet, perhaps arose from his having been the original Romeo in our author's play.

Camden has placed the death of Burbadge on the 9th of March, 1619. On what day he died, is now of little consequence; but to ascertain the degree of credit due to historians is of some importance; and it may be worth while to remark how very seldom minute accuracy is to be expected even from contemporary writers. The fact is, that Burbadge died some days later, probably on the 13th of that month; for his will was made on the 12th, and he was buried in the church of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, on the 16th of March, 1618-19. His last will, extracted from the registry of the Prerogative court, is as follows.

"MEMORANDUM, That on Frydaye the twelfth of March, Anno Domini, one thousand six hundred and eighteen,
Richard

* In writing this performer's name I have followed the spelling used by his brother, who was a witness to his will; but the name ought rather to be written *Burbidge*, (as it often formerly was,) being manifestly an abbreviation or corruption of *Borough-bridge*.

† "1619, Martii 9. Richardus Burbadge, alter Roscius, obiit."
Regni regis Jacobi I. Annalium Apparatus, 4to. 1691.

Richard Burbage of the parish of Saint Leonard, Shoreditch, in the county of Middlesex, gent. being sick in body, but of good and perfect remembrance, did make his last will and testament, nuncupative, in manner and form following; viz, He the said Richard did nominate and appoint his well beloved wife Winifride Burbage to be his sole executrix of all his goods & chattels whatsoever, in the presence and hearing of the persons undernamed:

Cuthbert Burbadge, brother to the testator.

† The mark of Elizabeth, his wife.

Nicholas Tooley.

Anne Lancaster.

Richard Robinson.

† The mark of Elizabeth Graves.

Henry Jacksonne.

Probatum fuit testamentum superscriptum apud London, coram iudice, 22^o Aprilis, 1619, juramento Winifride Burbadge, relicte dicti defuncti et executricis in eodem testamento nominat. cui commissa fuit administratio de bene, &c. jurat.

Richard Burbadge is introduced in person in an old play called *The Returne from Parnassus*, (written in or about 1602,) and instructs a Cambridge scholar how to play the part of King Richard the Third, in which Burbadge was greatly admired. That he represented this character, is ascertained by Bishop Corbet, who in his *Iter Boreale*, speaking of his host at Leicester, tells us,

“—when he would have said, King Richard died,

“ And call’d a horse, a horse, he *Burbage* cry’d.”

He probably also performed the parts of King John, Richard the Second, Henry the Fifth, Timon, Brutus, Coriolanus, Macbeth, Lear, and Othello.

He was one of the principal sharers or proprietors of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres; and was of such eminence, that in a letter preserved in the British Museum, written in the year 1613, (Mss. Harl. 7002,) the actors at the Globe are called *Burbadge's Company*^s.

The following character of this celebrated player is given by Fleckno in his *Short Discourse of the English Stage*, 1664.

“ He

^s In Jonson's *Masque of Christmas*, 1616, Burbadge and Heminge are both mentioned as managers: “I could ha' had money enough for him, an I would ha' been tempted, and ha' set him out by the week to the king's players: Master Burbadge hath been about and about with me, and so has old Mr. Heminge too; they ha' need of him.”

"He was a delightful Proteus, so wholly transforming himself into his parts, and putting off himself with his cloaths, as he never (not so much as in the tiring house) assumed himself again, untill the play was done. He had all the parts of an excellent orator, animating his words with speaking, and speech with action; his auditors being never more delighted than when he spake, nor more sorry than when he held his peace: yet even then he was an excellent actor still; never failing in his part, when he had done speaking, but with his looks and gesture maintaining it still to the height."

It should not, however, be concealed, that Fleckno had previously printed this character as the portrait of *An excellent actor*, in general, and there is reason to believe that this writer never saw Burbadge: for Fleckno did not die till about the year 1682 or 1683, and consequently, supposing him then seventy-five years old, he must have been a boy when this celebrated player died. The testimony of Sir Richard Baker is of more value, who pronounces him to have been "such an actor, as no age must ever look to see the like." Sir Richard Baker was born in 1568, and died in 1644-5; and appears, from various passages in his works, to have paid much attention to the theatre, in defence of which he wrote a treatise.

In Philpot's additions to Camden's *Remains*, we find an epitaph on this tragedian, more concise than even that on Ben Jonson; being only, "*Exit Burbidge.*"

The following old epitaph on Burbadge, which is found in a Ms. in the Museum, (Mss. Sloan. 1786,) is only worthy of preservation, as it shews how high the reputation of this actor was in his own age.

"Epitaph on Mr. Richard Burbadge, the player*.

"This life's a play, scean'd out by natures arte,

"Where every man hath his allotted parte.

"This

* I did not till lately discover that there is an original picture of this admired actor in Dulwich College, or his portrait should have been engraved for this work. However, the defect will very speedily be remedied by Mr. Sylvester Harding, the ingenious artist whom I employed to make a copy of the picture of Lowin at Oxford, which he executed with perfect fidelity; and who means to give the publick in twenty numbers, at a very moderate price, not only all such portraits as can be found, of the actors who personated the principal characters in our author's plays, while he was on the stage, but also an assemblage of genuine heads of the real personages represented in them; together with various views of the different places, in which the scene of his historical dramas is placed. Each plate will be of the same size as that of Lowin, so as to suit the present edition.

- " This man hathe now (as many more can tell)
 " Ended his part, and he hath acted well.
 " The play now ended, think his grave to be
 " The detiring howse of his sad tragedie;
 " Where to give his fame this, be not afraid,
 " Here lies the best tragedian ever plaid."

JOHN HEMINGE

is said by Roberts the player to have been a tragedian, and in conjunction with Condell, to have followed the business of printing; but it does not appear that he had any authority for these assertions. In some tract of which I forgot to preserve the title, he is said to have been the original performer of Falstaff.

I searched the register of St. Mary's Aldermanbury, (in which parish this actor lived,) for the time of his birth, in vain. Ben Jonson in the year 1616, as we have just seen, calls him *old Mr. Heminge*: if at that time he was sixty years of age, then his birth must be placed in 1556. I suspect that both he and Burbadge were Shakspeare's countrymen, and that Heminge was born at Shottery, a village in Warwickshire at a very small distance from Stratford-upon Avon; where Shakspeare found his wife. I find two families of this name settled in that town early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Elizabeth, the daughter of *John Heming* of Shottery, was baptized at Stratford-upon-Avon, March 12, 1567. This John might have been the father of the actor, though I have found no entry relative to his baptism: for he was probably born before the year 1558, when the Register commenced. In the village of Shottery also lived *Richard Heming*, who had a son christened by the name of John, March 7, 1570. Of the Burbadge family the only notice I have found, is, an entry in the register of the parish of Stratford, October 12, 1565, on which day Philip Green was married in that town to *Ursula Burbadge*, who might have been sister to James Burbadge, the father of the actor, whose marriage I suppose to have taken place about that time. If this conjecture be well founded, our poet, we see, had an easy introduction to the theatre.

John Heminge appears to have married in or before the year, 1589, his eldest daughter, Alice, having been baptized October 6, 1590. Beside this child, he had four sons; John, born in 1598, who died an infant; a second John, baptized August 7, 1599; William, baptized October 3, 1602, and George, baptized February 11, 1603-4; and eight daughters;

ters; Judith, Thomasine, Joan, Rebecca, Beatrice, Elizabeth, Mary, (who died in 1611,) and Margaret. Of his daughters four only appear to have been married; Alice to John Atkins in January 1612-13; Rebecca to Captain William Smith; Margaret to Mr. Thomas Sheppard, and another to a person of the name of Merefield. The eldest son, John, probably died in his father's life-time, as by his last will he constituted his son William his executor.

William, whose birth Wood has erroneously placed in 1605, was a student of Christ-church, Oxford, where he took the degree of a Master of Arts in 1628. Soon after his father's death he commenced a dramatick poet, having produced in March 1632-3 a comedy entitled *The Course of a Hare, or the Madcapp*¹, which was performed at the Fortune theatre, but is now lost. He was likewise author of two other plays which are extant; *The Fatal Contrab*, published in 1653, and *The Jews Tragedy*, 1662.

From an entry in the Council-books at Whitehall, I find that John Heminge was one of the principal proprietors of the Globe playhouse, before the death of Queen Elizabeth. He is joined with Shakspeare, Burbadge, &c. in the licence granted by King James immediately after his accession to the throne in 1603; and all the payments made by the Treasurer of the Chamber in 1613, on account of plays performed at court, are "to *John Heminge* and the rest of his fellows." So also in several subsequent years, in that and the following reign. In 1623, in conjunction with Condell, he published the first complete edition of our author's plays; soon after which it has been supposed that he withdrew from the theatre; but this is a mistake. He certainly then ceased to act², but he continued chief director of the king's company of comedians to the time of his death. He died at his house in Aldermanbury, where he had long lived, on the 10th of October 1630, in, as I conjecture, the 74th or 75th year of his age, and was buried on the 12th, as appears by the Register of St. Mary's Aldermanbury, in which he is styled, "John Heminge, *player*."

I suspect

¹ Mss. Herbert.

² That he and Condell had ceased to act in the year 1623, is ascertained by a passage in their Address "to the great varietie of readers," prefixed to our poet's plays. "Read him therefore, and againe, and againe: and if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his friends, whom if you need, can be your guides," i. e. their fellow-comedians, who still continued on the stage, and, by representing our author's plays, could elucidate them, and thus serve as guides to the publick.

I suspect he died of the plague, which had raged so violently that year, that the playhouses were shut up in April, and not permitted to be opened till the 12th of November, at which time the weekly bill of those who died in London of that distemper, was diminished to twenty-nine². His son William, into whose hands his papers must have fallen, survived him little more than twenty years, having died some time before the year 1653: and where those books of account of which his father speaks, now are, cannot be ascertained. One cannot but entertain a wish that at some future period they may be discovered, as they undoubtedly would throw some light on our ancient stage-history. The day before his death, John Heminge made his will, of which I subjoin a copy, extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court. In this instrument he styles himself *a grocer*, but how he obtained his freedom of the grocers' company, does not appear.

“ **I**N the name of God, Amen, the 9th day of October, 1630, and in the 6th year of the reign of our sovereign Lord, Charles, by the grace of God king of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. I John Heminge, citizen and grocer of London, being of perfect mind and memory, thanks be therefore given unto Almighty God, yet well knowing and considering the frailty and uncertainty of man's life, do therefore make, ordain, and declare this my last will and testament in manner and form following.

First, and principally, I give and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty God, my Maker and Creator, hoping and assuredly believing through the only merits, death and passion, of Jesus Christ my saviour and redeemer, to obtain remission and pardon of all my sins, and to enjoy eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven; and my body I commit to the earth, to be buried in christian manner, in the parish church of Mary Aldermanbury in London, as near unto my loving wife Rebecca Heminge, who lieth there interred, and under the same stone which lieth in part over her there, if the same conveniently may be: wherein I do desire my executor herein after named carefully to see my will performed, and that my funeral may be in decent and comely manner performed in the evening, without any vain pomp or cost therein to be bestowed.

Item, My will is, that all such debts, as I shall happen to owe at the time of my decease to any person or persons, (being truly and properly mine own debts,) shall be well
and

² M^s. Herbert.

and truly satisfied and paid as soon after my decease as the same conveniently may be; and to that intent and purpose my will and mind is, and I do hereby limit and appoint, that all my leases, goods, chattles, plate and household stufte whatsoever, which I leave or shall be possessed of at the time of my decease, shall immediately after my decease be sold to the most and best benefit and advantage that the same or any of them may or can, and that the monies thereby raised shall go and be employed towards the payment and discharge of my said debts, as soon as the same may be converted into monies and be received, without fraud or covin; and that if the same leases, goods, and chattels, shall not raise so much money as shall be sufficient to pay my debts, then my will and mind is, and I do hereby will and appoint, that the moiety or one half of the yearly benefit and profit of the several parts which I have by lease in the several play-houses of the Globe and Black-friers, for and during such time and term as I have therein, be from time to time received and taken up by my executor herein after named, and by him from time to time faithfully employed towards the payment of such of my said own proper debts which shall remain unsatisfied, and that proportionably to every person and persons to whom I shall then remain indebted, until by the said moiety or one half of the said yearly benefit and profit of the said parts they shall be satisfied and paid without fraud or covin. And if the said moiety or one half of the said yearly benefit of my said parts in the said play-houses shall not in some convenient time raise sufficient moneys to pay my said own debts, then my will and mind is, and I do hereby limit and appoint, that the other moiety or half part of the benefit and profit of my said parts in the said play-houses be also received and taken up by my said executor herein after named, and faithfully from time to time employed and paid towards the speedier satisfaction and payment of my said debts. And then, after my said debts shall be so satisfied and paid, then I limit and appoint the said benefit and profit arising by my said parts in the said play-houses, and the employment of the same, to be received and employed towards the payment of the legacies by me herein after given and bequeathed, and to the raising of portions for such of my said children as at the time of my decease shall have received from me no advancement. And I do hereby desire my executor herein after named to see this my will and meaning herein to be well and truly performed, according to the trust and confidence by me in him reposed.

Item, I give, devise, and bequeath, unto my daughter Rebecca Smith, now wife of Captain William Smith, my best

best suit of linen; wrought with entwork, which was her mother's; and to my son Smith, her husband, his wife's picture, set up in a frame in my house.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Margaret Sheppard, wife of Mr. Thomas Sheppard, my red cushions embroidered with bugle, which were her mother's; and to my said son Sheppard, his wife's picture, which is also set up in a frame in my house.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Elizabeth, my green cushions which were her mother's.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Mercfield my clothe-of-silver striped cushions which were her mother's.

Item. I give and bequeath unto so many of my daughter Mercfield's, and my daughter Sheppard's children as shall be living at the time of my decease, fifty shillings apiece.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my grandchild, Richard Atkins, the sum of five pounds of lawful money of England, to buy him books.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my son-in-law John Atkins, and his now wife, if they shall be living with me at the time of my decease, forty shillings, to make them two rings in remembrance of me.

Item. I give and bequeath unto every of my fellows and sharers, his majesties servants, which shall be living at the time of my decease, the sum of ten shillings apiece, to make them rings for remembrance of me.

Item. I give and bequeath unto John Rice, Clerk, of St. Saviour's in Southwark, (if he shall be living at the time of my decease,) the sum of twenty shillings of lawful English money, for a remembrance of my love unto him.

Item. I give and bequeath unto the poor of the parish of Saint Mary, Aldermanbury, where I long lived, and whither I have bequeathed my body for burial, the sum of forty shillings of lawful English money, to be distributed by the churchwardens of the same parish where most need shall be.

Item. My will and mind is, and I do hereby limit and appoint, that the several legacies and sums of money by me herein before bequeathed to be paid in money, be raised and taken out of the yearly profit and benefit which shall arise or be made by my several parts and shares in the several play-houses called the Globe and Blackfriars, after my said debts shall be paid, with as much speed as the same conveniently may be; and I do hereby will, require, and charge my executor herein after named especially to take care that my debts, first, and then those legacies, be well and truly paid and discharged, as soon as the same may be so raised by the sale of
my

my goods and by the yearly profits of my parts and shares; and that my estate may be so ordered to the best profit and advantage for the better payment of my debts and discharge of my legacies before mentioned with as much speed as the same conveniently may be, according as I have herein before in this will directed and appointed the same to be, without any lessening, diminishing, or undervaluing thereof, contrary to my true intent and meaning herein declared. And for the better performance thereof, my will, mind, and desire is, that my said parts in the said play-houses should be employed in playing, the better to raise profit thereby, as formerly the same have been, and have yielded good yearly profit, as by my books will in that behalf appear. And my will and mind is, and I do hereby ordain, limit, and appoint, that after my debts, funeral, and legacies shall be paid and satisfied out of my estate, and then the residue and remainder of my goods, chattels, and credits whatsoever shall be equally parted and divided to and amongst such of my children as at the time of my decease shall be unmarried or unadvanced, and shall not have received from me any portion in marriage or otherwise, further than only for their education and breeding, part and part like; and I do hereby ordain and make my son William Heminge to be the executor of this my last will and testament, requiring him to see the same performed in and by all things, according to my true meaning herein declared. And I do desire and appoint my loving friends Mr. Burbage * and Mr. Rice to be overseers of this my last will and testament, praying them to be aiding and assisting to my said executor with their best advice and council in the execution thereof: and I do hereby utterly revoke all former wills by me heretofore made, and do pronounce, publish, and declare this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal the day and year first written.

Probatum fuit testamentum superscriptum apud London coram venerabili viro, magistro Willielmo James, legum doctore, Surrogato, undecimo die mensis Octobris, Anno Domini, 1630, Juramento Willielmi Heminge filii naturalis et legitim. dicti defuncti, et executoris, cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat.

AUGUSTINE PHILIPS.

This performer is likewise named in the licence granted by king James in 1603. It appears from Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, printed in 1612, that he was then dead. In an extraordinary exhibition, entitled *The Seven Deadly Sins*, written

* Cuthbert Burbadge, brother to the actor.

ten by Tarleton, of which the *Mf.* plot or scheme is in my possession, he represented *Sardanapalus*. I have not been able to learn what parts he performed in our author's plays; but believe that he was in the same class as Kempe, and Armine; for he appears, like the former of these players, to have published a ludicrous metrical piece, which was entered on the Stationers' books in 1595. Philips's production was entitled *The Jigg of the Slippers*.

WILLIAM KEMPE

was the successor of Tarleton. "Here I must needs remember Tarleton, (says Heywood in his *Apology for Actors*,) in his time gracious with the queen his soveraigne, and in the people's general applause; whom succeeded *Will. Kemp*, as well in the favour of her majestie, as in the opinion and good thoughts of the general audience." From the quarto editions of some of our author's plays, we learn that he was the original performer of Dogberry in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and of Peter in *Romeo and Juliet*. From an old comedy called *The Returne from Parnassus*, we may collect, that he was the original Justice Shallow; and the contemporary writers inform us that he usually acted the part of a Clown; in which character, like Tarleton, he was celebrated for his extemporal wit⁴. Launcelot in the *Merchant of Venice*, Touchstone in *As you like it*, Launce in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, were probably also performed by this comedian. He was an author as well as an actor⁵.

So

⁴ See p. 96, n. 1.

⁵ See *The Returne from Parnassus*, a comedy, 1606: "Indeed, *M. Kempe*, you are very famous, but that is as well for *workers in print* as your part in cue." Kempe's *New Jigg of the Kitchen-stuff Woman* was entered on the books of the Stationers' company in 1595; and in the same year was licenced to Thomas Gosson, "*Kempes New Jigge betwixt a fouldier and a miser and Sym the clown.*"

Sept. 7. 1593, was entered on the Stationers' Books, by R. Jones, "A comedie entitled *A knack how to know a knave*, newly set forth, as it hath been sundrye times plaied by Ned Allen and his company, with *Kempes* applauded merriment of the *Men of Gotham*."

In the Bodleian Library, among the books given to it by Robert Burton, is the following tract, bound up with a few others of the same size, in a quarto volume marked L, 62d. art.

"Kemps nine daies wonder performed in a daunce from London to Norwich. Containing the pleasure, paines and kind entertainment of William Kemp between London and that city, in his late morrice. Wherein is somewhat set downe worth note; to reprove the flanders spread of him: many things merry, nothing hurtfull. Written by himselfe, to satisfie his friends." (Lond. E. A. for Nicholas Ling 1600. b. 1.—With a wooden cut of Kempe as a morrice-dancer, preceded by a fellow with a pipe and drum, whom he (in the book) calls Thomas Slye his taberer.) It is dedicated to "The true ennobled lady, and his most bountifull mistris, mistris Anne Fitton, mayde of honour to the most sacred mayde royall queene Elizabeth."

So early as in the year 1589. Kempe's comick talents appear to have been highly estimated, for an old pamphlet called *An Almond for a Parrot*, written, I think, by Thomas Nashe, and published about that time, is dedicated "to that most comicall and conceited Cavalcire *Monfieur du Kempe*, Jestmonger, and vice-gerent generall to the Ghost of Dicke Tarleton."

From a passage in one of Decker's tracts it may be presumed that this comedian was dead in the year 1609⁶.

In Braithwaite's *Remains*, 1618, he is thus commemorated :

"UPON KEMPE AND HIS MORICE, WITH HIS EPITAPH.

"Welcome from Norwich, Kempe : all joy to seee
 "Thy safe return moriscoed lustily.
 "But out alas ! how soone's thy morice done,
 "When pipe and tabor, all thy friends be gone ;
 "And leave thee now to dance the second part
 "With feeble nature, not with nimble art !
 "Then all thy triumphs fraught with strains of mirth,
 "Shall be cag'd up within a chest of earth :
 "Shall be ? they are ; thou hast danc'd thee out of breath ;
 "And now must make thy parting dance with death."

THOMAS POPE.

This actor likewise performed the part of a Clown⁷. He died before the year 1600⁸.

GEORGE BRYAN.

I have not been able to gather any intelligence concerning this performer, except that in the exhibition of *The Seven Deadly Sins* he represented the Earl of Warwick. He was, I believe, on the stage before the year 1588.

HENRY CUNDALL

is said by Roberts the player to have been a comedian, but he does not mention any other authority for this assertion but stage-tradition. In Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy* he originally acted

⁶ "Tush, tush, Tarleton, *Kempe*, nor Singer, nor all the litter of foolles that now come drawling behind them, never played the clownes part more naturally than the arrantest sot of you all."

Guls Hornebooke, 1609.

⁷ "—what meanes Singer then,

"And *Pope*, the clowne, to speak so borish, when

"They counterfaite the clownes upon the stage?"

Humours Ordinarie, where a man may be verie merie and exceeding well used for his suspence. (No date.)

⁸ Heywood's *Apology for Actors*.

acted the part of the Cardinal; and as, when that play was printed in 1623, another performer had succeeded him in that part, he had certainly before that time retired from the stage. He still, however, continued to have an interest in the theatre, being mentioned with the other players to whom a licence was granted by King Charles the First in 1625. He had probably a considerable portion of the *shares* or property of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres. This actor as well as Heminge lived in Aldermanbury, in which parish he served the office of *Sideman* in the year 1606. I have not been able to ascertain his age; but he appears to have married about the year 1598, and had eight children, the eldest of whom was born in Feb. 1598-99, and died an infant. Three only of his children appear to have survived him; Henry, born in 1600; Elizabeth in 1606; and William, baptized May 26, 1611. Before his death he resided for some time at Fulham, but he died in London, and was buried in his parish church in Aldermanbury, Dec. 29, 1627. On the 13th of that month he made his will, of which I subjoin a copy, extracted from the registry of the Prerogative Court.

“ In the name of God, Amen, I Henry Cundall of London, gentleman, being sick in body, but of perfect mind and memory, laud and praise be therefore given to Almighty God, calling to my remembrance that there is nothing in this world more sure and certain to mankind than death, and nothing more uncertain than the hour thereof, do therefore make and declare this my last will and testament in manner and form following; that is to say, first I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, trusting and assuredly believing that only by the merits of the precious death and passion of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ I shall obtain full and free pardon and remission of all my sins; and shall enjoy everlasting life in the kingdom of heaven, amongst the elect children of God. My body I commit the earth, to be decently buried in the night-time in such parish where it shall please God to call me. My worldly substance I dispose of as followeth. And first concerning all and singular my freehold messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever, with their and every of their appurtenances, whereof I am and stand seized of any manner of estate of inheritance, I give, devise and bequeath the same as followeth.

Imprimis, I give, devise and bequeath all and singular my freehold messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever, with their and every of their appurtenances, situate, lying and being in Hellmett-court in the Strand, and elsewhere,

where, in the county of Middlesex, unto Elizabeth my well beloved wife, for and during the term of her natural life; and from and immediately after her decease, unto my son Henry Cundall, and to the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten, and for want of such issue unto my son William Cundall, and to the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten; and for default of such issue unto my daughter Elizabeth Finch, and to her heirs and assigns for ever.

Item, I give, devise, and bequeath all and singular my freehold messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever, with their and every of their appurtenances, situate, lying and being in the parish of St. Bride, alias Bridgett, near Fleetstreet, London, and elsewhere in the city of London, and the suburbs thereof, unto my well beloved wife Elizabeth Cundall and to her assigns, until my said son William Cundall his term of apprenticeship shall be fully expired by effluxion of time; and from and immediately after the said term of apprenticeship shall be so fully expired, I give, devise and bequeath the same messuages and premises situate in the city of London, and the suburbs thereof, unto my said son William Cundall, and to the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten, and for default of such issue unto my said son Henry Cundall, and to the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten, and for default of such issue unto my said daughter Elizabeth Finch, and to her heirs and assigns for ever. And as concerning all and singular my goods, chattels, plate, household stuff, ready money, debts and personal estate, whatsoever and wheresoever, I give, devise, and bequeath the same as followeth; viz.

Imprimis, Whereas I am executor of the last will and testament of John Underwood, deceased, and by force of the same executorship became possessed of so much of the personal estate of the said John Underwood, which is expressed in an inventory thereof, made and by me exhibited in due form of law into the ecclesiastical court. And whereas also in discharge of my said executorship I have from time to time disbursed divers sums of money in the education and bringing up of the children of the said John Underwood deceased as by my accompts kept in that behalf appeareth. Now in discharge of my conscience, and in full performance of the trust reposed in me by the said John Underwood, I do charge my executrix faithfully to pay to the surviving children of the said John Underwood all and whatsoever shall be found and appear by my accompts to belong unto them, and to deliver unto them all such rings as was their late father's, and which are by me kept by themselves apart in a little casket.

Item, I do make, name, ordain and appoint my said well beloved wife, Elizabeth Cundall, the full and sole executrix

of this my last will and testament, requiring and charging her, as she will answer the contrary before Almighty God at the dreadfull day of judgment, that she will truly and faithfully perform the same, in and by all things according to my true intent and meaning; and I do earnestly desire my very loving friends, John Heminge, gentleman, Cuthbert Burbage, gentleman, my son-in-law Herbert Finch, and Peter Saunderfon, grocer, to be my overseers, and to be aiding and assisting unto my said executrix in the due execution and performance of this my last will and testament. And I give and bequeath to every of my said four several overseers the sum of five pounds apiece to buy each of them a piece of plate.

Item, I give, devise, and bequeath, unto my said son William Cundall, all the clear yearly rents and profits which shall arise and come from the time of my decease, of and by my leases and terms of years, of all my messuages, houses, and places, situate in the Blackfriars, London, and at the Bankside in the county of Surry, until such time as that the full sum of three hundred pounds by those rents and profits may be raised for a stock for my said son William*, if he shall so long live.

Item, for as much as I have by this my well dealt very bountifully with my will beloved wife Elizabeth Cundall, considering my estate, I do give and bequeath unto my son Henry Cundall for his maintainance, either at the university or elsewhere, one annuity or yearly sum of thirty pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto my said son Henry Cundall, or his assigns, during all the term of the natural life of the said Elizabeth my wife, if my said son Henry Cundall shall so long live, at the four most usual feast-days or terms in the year, that is to say, at the feasts of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary, the Nativity of Saint John Baptist, and St. Michael the Archangel; or within the space of twenty and eight days next ensuing after every of the same feast-days, by even and equal portions: the first payment thereof to begin and to be made at such of the said feast-days as shall first and next happen after the day of my decease, or within the space of twenty and eight days next ensuing after the same feast-day.

Item, I give and bequeath unto widow Martin and widow Gimber, to each of them respectively, for and during all the terms of their natural lives severally, if my leases and terms of years of and in my houses in Aldermanbury in London shall so long continue unexpired, one annuity or yearly sum of twenty

* He was probably bound apprentice to Peter Saunderfon, grocer.

twenty shillings apiece, of lawful money of England, to be paid unto them severally, by even portions quarterly, at the feast-days above mentioned, or within the space of twenty and eight days next ensuing after every of the same feast-days; the first payment of them severally to begin and to be made at such of the said feasts as shall first and next happen after my decease or within the space of twenty and eight days next ensuing after the same feast.

Item, I give, devise, and bequeath unto the poor people of the parish of Fulham in the county of Middlesex, where I now dwell, the sum of five pounds, to be paid to master Doctor Clewett, and Master Edmond Powell of Fulham, gentleman, and by them to be distributed.

Item, I give, devise, and bequeath, unto my said well beloved wife Elizabeth Cundall, and to my said well beloved daughter Elizabeth Finch, all my house-hold stuff, bedding, linen, brass and pewter, whatsoever, remaining and being as well at my house in Fulham aforesaid, as also in my house in Aldermanbury in London; to be equally divided between them part and part alike. And for the more equal dealing in that behalf, I will, appoint, and request my said overseers, or the greater number of them, to make division thereof, and then my wife to have the preferment of the choice.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my cousin Frances Gurney, alias Hulse, my aunt's daughter, the sum of five pounds, and I give unto the daughter of the said Frances, the like sum of five pounds.

Item, I give, devise and bequeath unto such and so many of the daughters of my cousin Gilder, late of New Buckenham in the county of Norfolk, deceased, as shall be living at the time of my decease, the sum of five pounds apiece.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my old servant Elizabeth Wheaton a mourning gown and forty shillings in money, and that place or priviledge which she now exerciseth and enjoyeth in the houses of the Blackfryers, London, and the Globe on the Bankside, for and during all the term of her natural life, if my estate shall so long continue in the premises; and I give unto the daughter of the said Elizabeth Wheaton the sum of five pounds, to be paid unto the said Elizabeth Wheaton, for the use of her said daughter, within the space of one year next after my decease. And I do hereby will, appoint and declare, that an acquittance under the hand and seal of the said Elizabeth Wheaton, upon the receipt of the said legacy of five pounds, for the use of her said daughter, shall be, and shall be deemed, adjudged, construed, and taken to be, both in law and in equity, unto my now executrix a sufficient re-

leave and discharge for and concerning the payment of the same.

Item, I give, devise and bequeath, all the rest and residue of my goods, chattels, leases, money, debts, and personal estate, whatsoever and wheresoever, (after my debts shall be paid and my funeral charges and all other charges about the execution of this my will first paid and discharged) unto my said well beloved wife, Elizabeth Cundall.

Item, My will and mind is, and I do hereby desire and appoint, that all such legacies, gifts and bequests as I have by this my will given, devised or bequeathed unto any person or persons, for payment whereof no certain time is hereby before limited or appointed, shall be well and truly paid by my executrix within the space of one year next after my decease. Finally, I do hereby revoke, countermand, and make void, all former wills, testaments, codicils, executors, legacies, and bequests, whatsoever, by me at any time heretofore named, made, given or appointed; willing and minding that these presents only shall stand and be taken for my last will and testament, and none other. In witness whereof I the said Henry Cundall, the testator, to this my present last will and testament, being written on nine sheets of paper, with my name subscribed to every sheet, have set my seal, the thirteenth day of December, in the third year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles, by the grace of God king of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c.

HENRY CUNDALL.

Signed, sealed, pronounced and declared, by the said Henry Cundall, the testator, as his last will and testament, on the day and year above written, in the presence of us whose names are here under written :

Robert Yonge.

Hum. Dyson, Notary Publique.

And of me Ro. Dickens, servant unto the said Notary.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud Lond. coram magistro Richardo Zouche, legum doctore, Surrogato, 24^o die Februarii, 1627, juramento Elizabethæ Cundall, relicte dicti defuncti et executr. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat.

WILLIAM SLY

was joined with Shakspeare, &c. in the licence granted in 1603. — He is introduced, personally, in the induction to Marston's *Malescontent*, 1604, and from his there using an affected



*Engraved by H. Brocas from an original Picture
in the Ashmole Museum. Oxford.*

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ferred phrase of 'Ofrick's in *Hamlet*, we may collect that he performed that part. He died before the year 1612⁹.

RICHARD COWLEY

appears to have been an actor of a low class, having performed the part of Verges in *Much ado about Nothing*. He lived in the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, and had two sons baptized there; Cuthbert, born in 1597, and Richard born in 1599. I know not when this actor died.

JOHN LOWIN

was a principal performer in these plays. If the date on his picture¹ in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, is accurate, he was born in 1576. Wright mentions in his *Historia Histrionica* that "before the wars he used to act the part of Falstaff with mighty applause;" but without doubt he means during the reign of King Charles the First, from 1625 to 1641. When our poet's *King Henry IV.* was first exhibited, Lowin was but twenty-one years old; it is therefore probable that Heminge, or some other actor, originally represented the fat knight, and that several years afterwards the part was resigned to Lowin.

He is said by Roberts the player to have also performed king Henry the Eighth and Hamlet; but with respect to the latter his account is certainly erroneous; for it appears from more ancient writers, that Joseph Taylor was the original performer of that character².

Lowin is introduced, in person, in the induction to Marston's *Malecontent*, printed in 1604; and he and Taylor are mentioned in a copy of verses, written in the year 1632, soon after the appearance of Jonson's *Magick Lady*, as the two most celebrated actors of that time:

"Let Lowin cease, and Taylor scorn to touch

"The loathed stage, for thou hast made it such."

Beside the parts already mentioned, this actor represented the following characters: Morose, in *The Silent Woman*; — Volpone, in *The Fox*; — Mammon, in *The Alchymist*; — Melantius, in *The Maid's Tragedy*; — Aubrey, in *The Bloody Brother*; — Bosola, in *The Dutchess of Malfy*; — Jacomo, in *The Deserving Favourite*; — Eubulus, in Massinger's *Picture*; — Domitian, in *The Roman Actor*; — and Belleur, in *The Wild Goose Chase*.

Though

⁹ Heywood's *Apology for Actors*.

¹ This date, which the engraver of the annexed portrait has inadvertently omitted, is—"1640, Aet. 64."

² *Histor. Histrion. and Roscius Anglicanus*.

Though Heminge and Condell continued to have an interest in the theatre to the time of their death, yet about the year 1623, I believe, they ceased to act; and that the management had in the next year devolved on Lowin and Taylor, is ascertained by the following note made by Sir Henry Herbert in his office-book, under the year 1633.

"On friday the 19th of October³, 1633, I sent a warrant by a messenger of the chamber to suppress *The Tamer Tamd*, to the Kings players, for that afternoone, and it was obeyd; upon complaints of foule and offensive maters conteyned therein.

"They acted *The Scornfull Lady* instead of it. I have entered the warrant here.

"These are to will and require you to forbear the actinge of your play called *The Tamer tamd or the Taminge of the Tamer*, this afternoone, or any more till you have leave from mee; and this at your perill. On friday morninge the 18 Octob. 1633.

"To Mr. Taylor, Mr. Lowins, or any of the King's players at the Blackfryers.

"On saterday morninge followinge the booke was brought mee, and at my Lord of Hollands request I returned it to the players y^e monday morninge after, purgd of oaths, prophaneſs, and ribaldrye, being y^e 21 of Octob. 1633.

"Because the stoppinge of the acting of this play for that afternoone, it being an ould play, hath rayſed some discourſe in the players, thogh no disobedience, I have thought fitt to insert here ther submission upon a former disobedience, and to declare that it concernes the Master of the Revells to bee carefull of their ould revived playes, as of their new, since they may conteyne offensive matter, which ought not to bee allowed in any time.

"The Master ought to have copies of their new playes left with him, that he may be able to shew what he hath allowed or disallowed.

"All ould plays ought to bee brought to the Master of the Revells, and have his allowance to them, for which he should have his fee, since they may be full of offensive things against church and state; y^e rather that in former time the poetts tooke greater liberty than is allowed them by mee.

"The players ought not to study their parts till I have allowed of the booke.

"To

³ So the MS. though afterwards Sir Henry Herbert calls it "friday the 18th"

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'To Sir Henry Herbert, K.^t master of his Ma.^{ties} Revels.'

"After our humble servise⁴ remembred unto your good worship, Whereas not long since we acted a play called *The Spanishe Viceroy*, not being licensed under your worships hande, nor allowd of: wee doe confess and herby acknowledge that wee have offended, and that it is in your power to punish this offense, and are very sorry for it; and doe likewise promise herby that wee will not act any play without your hand or substituts hereafter, nor doe any thinge that may prejudice the authority of your office: So hoping that this humble submission of ours may bee accepted, wee have therunto sett our hands. This twentieth of Decemb. 1624.

Joseph Taylor.

John Lowen.

Richard Robinson.

John Shancke.

Elyard Swanston.

John Rice.

Thomas Pollard.

Will. Rowley.

Robert Benfeilde.

Richard Sharpe.

George Burght.

"Mr. Knight,

"In many things you have saved mee labour; yet wher your judgment or penn sayld you, I have made bould to use mine. Purge ther parts, as I have the booke. And I hope every hearer and player will thinke that I have done God good servise, and the quality no wronge; who hath no greater enemies than oaths, prophanes, and publique ribaldry, w^{ch} for the future I doe absolutely forbid to bee presented unto mee in any playbooke, as you will answer it at your perill. 21 Octob. 1633.

"This was subscribed to their play of *The Tamer Tamed*, and directed to Knight, their book-keeper.

"The 24 of Octob. 1633, Lowins and Swanston were sorry for their ill manners, and craved my pardon, which I gave them in presence of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Benfeilde."

After the suppression of the theatres, Lowin became very poor. In 1652, in conjunction with Joseph Taylor, he published Fletcher's comedy called *The Wild Goose Chase*, for bread; and in his latter years, he kept an inn (*The Three Pidgeons*) at Brentford, in which town, Wright says, he died very old⁵. But that writer was mistaken with respect to the place of his death, for he died in London at the age of eighty-three, and was buried in the ground belonging to the parish

⁴ In the margin here Sir Henry Herbert has added this note. "Tis entered here for a remembrance against their disorders."

⁵ *Hist. Hist. p. 10.*

parish of St. Martin in the Fields, March 18, 1658-9: On the 8th of the following October administration of the goods of John Lowin was granted to Martha Lowin, I suppose the actor's widow. In the Register of persons buried in the parish of Brentford, which I carefully examined, no person of this name is mentioned between the years 1650, and 1660.

SAMUEL CROSS.

This actor was probably dead before the year 1600; for Heywood, who had himself written for the stage before that time, says he had never seen him.

ALEXANDER COOKE.

From *The Platt of the Seven Deadly Sinns*, it appears, that this actor was on the stage before 1538, and was the stage-heroine. He acted some woman's part in Jonson's *Sejanus*, and in *The Fox*; and we may presume, performed all the principal female characters in our author's plays.

SAMUEL GILBURNE. Unknown.

ROBERT ARMIN

performed in *The Alchemist* in 1610, and was alive in 1611, some verses having been addressed to him in that year by John Davies of Hereford; from which he appears to have occasionally performed the part of the Fool or Clown⁶.

He was author of a comedy called *The Two Maids of More-clacke*, [*Mortlake* it ought to be.] 1609. I have also a book, called *A Nest of Ninnies simply of themselves, without compound*, by Robert Armin, published in 1608. And at Stationers' Hall was entered in the same year "a book called *Phantasm the Italian Taylor and his Boy*, made by Mr. Armin, servant to his majesty."

Mr. Oldys, in his Ms. notes on Langbaine, says, that "Armin was an apprentice at first to a goldsmith in Lombard-street." He adds, that "the means of his becoming a player is recorded in Tarleton's jests printed in 1611, where it appears, this 'prentice going often to a tavern in Gracechurch-street, to dun the keeper thereof, who was a debtor to his master Tarleton, who of the master of that tavern was now only

- * "To honest, gamefome, Robert Armine,
- "Who tickles the spleene like a harmles vermin."
- "Armine, what shall I say of thee, but this,
- "Thou art a fool and knave;—both?—fie, I mis,
- "And wrong thee much; sith thou indeed art neither,
- "Although in *sevu* thou playest both together."

only a lodger in it, saw some verses written by Armin on the wainscot, upon his master's said debtor, whose name was *Charles Tarleton*, and liked them so well, that he wrote others under them, prophesying, that as he was, so *Armin* should be; therefore, calls him his adopted son, to wear the Clown's suit after him. And so it fell out, for the boy was so pleased with what Tarleton had written of him, so respected his person, so frequented his plays, and so learned his humour and manners, that from his private practice he came to publick playing his parts; that he was in great repute for the same at the *Globe* on the Bank-side, &c. all the former part of king James's reign.

WILLIAM OSTLER

had been one of the children of the Chapel; having acted in Johnson's *Poetaster*, together with Nat. Field and John Underwood, in 1601, and is said to have performed women's parts. In 1610 both he and Underwood acted as men in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*. In Davies's *Scourge of Folly*, there are some verses addressed to him with this title: "To the *Roscius* of these times, William Ostler." He acted Antonio in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, in 1623. I know not when he died.

NATHANIEL FIELD.

JOHN UNDERWOOD.

Both these actors had been children of the chapel⁷, and probably at the *Globe* and *Blackfriars* theatres performed female parts. Field, when he became too manly to represent the characters of women, played the part of *Buffy d'Ambois* in Chapman's play of that name. From the preface prefixed to one edition of it, it appears that he was dead in 1641.

There is a good portrait of this performer in *Dulwich college*, in a very singular dress.

Fleckno in his little tract on the English Stage, speaks of him as an actor of great eminence. A person of this name was the author of two comedies, called *A Woman's a Weathercock*, and *Amends for Ladies*, and assisted Massinger in writing *The Fatal Dowry*, but he scarcely could have been the player; for the first of the comedies abovementioned was printed in 1612, at which time this actor must have been yet a youth, having performed as one of the Children of the Revels, in Jonson's *Silent Woman*, in 1609.

15

The

⁷ See *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601, in which they both acted.

The only intelligence I have obtained of John Underwood, beside what I have already mentioned, is, that he performed the part of Delio in *The Dutchess of Malfy*, and that he died either in the latter end of the year 1624 or the beginning of the following year, having first made his will, of which the following is a copy :

In the name of God, Amen. I John Underwood, of the parish of Saint Bartholomew the Less in London, gent. being very weak and sick in body, but, thanks be given to Almighty God, in perfect mind and memory, do make and declare my last will and testament, in manner and form following : viz. First, I commend and commit my soul to Almighty God, and my body to the earth, to be buried at the discretion of my executors ; and my wordly goods and estate which it hath pleased the Almighty God to bless me with, I will, bequeath, and dispose as followeth ; that is to say, to and amongst my five children, namely, John Underwood, Elizabeth Underwood, Burbage Underwood, Thomas Underwood, and Isabell Underwood, (my debts and other legacies herein named paid, and my funeral and other just dues and duties discharged) all and singular my goods, household stuff, plate and other things whatsoever in or about my now dwelling house, or elsewhere ; and also all the right, title, or interest, part or share, that I have and enjoy at this present by lease or otherwise, or ought to have, possess and enjoy in any manner or kind at this present or hereafter, within the Blackfryars, London, or in the company of his M^{ties} servants, my loving and kind fellows, in their house there, or at the Globe on the Bankside ; and also that my part and share or due in or out of the playhouse called the Curtaine, situate in or near Holloway in the parish of St. Leonard, London, or in any other place ; to my said five children, equally and proportionably to be divided amongst them at their several ages of one and twenty years ; and during their and every of their minorities, for and towards their education, maintenance, and placing in the world, according to the discretion, direction, and care which I repose in my executors. Provided always and my true intent and meaning is, that my said executors shall not alienate, change or alter by sale or otherwise, directly or indirectly, any my part or share which I now have or ought to hold, have, possess and enjoy in the said playhouses called the Blackfryars, the Globe on the Bancke-side, and Curtaine aforementioned, or any of them, but that the increase and benefit out and from the same and every of them shall come, accrue and arise to my said executors, as now it is to me, to the use of my said children, equally to be divided

ded amongst them. Provided also that if the use and increase of my said estate given (as aforesaid) to my said children, shall prove insufficient or defective, in respect of the young years of my children, for their education and placing of them as my said executors shall think meet, then my will and true meaning is, that when the eldest of my said children shall attain to the age of one and twenty years, my said executors shall pay or cause to be paid unto him or her so surviving or attaining, his or her equal share of my estate so remaining undisbursed or undisposed for the uses aforesaid in their or either of their hands, and so for every or any of my said children attaining to the age aforesaid: yet if it shall appear or seem fit at the completion of my said children every or any of them at their said full age or ages, which shall first happen, my estate remaining not to be equally shared or disposed amongst the rest surviving in minority, then my will is, that it shall be left to my executors to give unto my child so attaining the age as they shall judge will be equal to the rest surviving and accomplishing the aforesaid age; and if any of them shall die or depart this life before they accomplish the said age or ages, I will and bequeath their part, share or portion to them, him or her surviving, at the ages aforesaid, equally to be divided by my executors as aforesaid. And I do hereby nominate and appoint my loving friends (in whom I repose my trust for performance of the premises) Henry Cundell, Thomas Sanford, and Thomas Smith, gentlemen, my executors of this my last will and testament; and do intreat my loving friends Mr. John Heminge, and John Lowyn, my fellowes, overseers of the same my last will and testament: and I give to my said executors and overseers for their pains (which I intreat them to accept) the sum of eleven shillings apiece to buy them rings, to wear in remembrance of me. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred twenty four.

JOHN UNDERWOOD.

A Codicil to be annexed to the last will and testament of John Underwood, late of the parish of Little St. Bartholomew, London, deceased, made the tenth day of the month of October, Anno Domini one thousand six hundred twenty-four or thereabouts, viz. his intent and meaning was, and so he did will, dispose, and bequeath (if his estate would thereunto extend, and it should seem convenient to his executors,) these particulars following in manner and form following: *scilicet*. to his daughter Elizabeth two seal rings of gold, one with a death's head, the other with a red stone in it. To his son John Underwood a seal
ring

ring of gold with an A and a B in it. To Burbage Underwood a seal ring with a blue stone in it. To Isabell one hoop ring of gold. To his said son John one hoop ring of gold. To his said daughter Elizabeth one wedding ring. To his said son Burbage one hoop ring, black and gold. To his said son Thomas one hoop ring of gold, and one gold ring with a knot. To his said daughter Isabell one blue saphire and one joint ring of gold. To John Underwood one half dozen of silver spoons and one gilt spoon. To Elizabeth one silver spoon and three gilt spoons. To Burbage Underwood, his son aforementioned, one great gilt spoon, one plain bowl and one rough bowl. To Thomas Underwood his son, one silver pomegranger, one silver taster, and one gilt spoon. To Isabell his said daughter, three silver spoons, two gilt spoons, and one gilt cup. Which was so had and done before sufficient and credible witness, the said testator being of perfect mind and memory,

Probatum fuit testamentum superscriptum una cum codicillo eidem annex. apud London, coram iudice, primo die mensis Februarii, Anno Domini 1624, juramento Henrici Cundell, unius executor. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat. reservata potestate similem commissionem faciendi Thome Sandford et Thome Smith, executoribus etiam in hujusmodi testamento nominat. cum venerint eam petitur.

NICHOLAS TOOLEY

acted Forobosco in *The Dutchess of Malfy*. From the *Platt of the Seven Deadly Sinns*, it appears. that he sometimes represented female characters. He performed in *The Alchemist* in 1610.

WILLIAM ECCLESTONE.

This performer's name occurs for the first time in B. Jonson's *Alchemist*, 1610. No other ancient piece (that I have seen) contains any memorial of this actor.

JOSEPH TAYLOR

appears from some verses already cited, to have been a celebrated actor. According to Downes the prompter, he was instructed by Shakspeare to play Hamlet; and Wright in his *Historia Histrionica*, says. "He performed that part incomparably well." From the remembrance of his performance of Hamlet, Sir William D'Avenant is said to have conveyed his instructions to Mr. Betterton. Taylor likewise played Iago. He also performed True-wit in *The Silent Woman*, Face in

*The Alchymist*³, and *Mosca* in *Volpone*; but not originally². He represented Ferdinand in *The Dutchess of Malfy*, after the death of Burbadge. He acted Mathias in *The Picture*, by Massinger; Paris in *The Roman Actor*; the Duke in Cavell's *Deserving Favourite*; Rollo in *The Bloody Brother*; and Mirabell in *The Wild Goose Chase*. There are verses by this performer prefixed to Massinger's *Roman Actor*, 1629.

In the year 1614, Taylor appears to have been at the head of a distinct company of comedians, who were distinguished by the name of *The Lady Elizabeth's Servants*⁴. However, he afterwards returned to his old friends; and after the death of Burbadge, Heminge and Condell, he in conjunction with John Lowin and Eliard Swanston had the principal management of the king's company. In Sept. 1639 he was appointed Yeoman of the Revels in ordinary to his Majesty, in the room of Mr. William Hunt. There were certain perquisites annexed to this office, and a salary of sixpence a day. When he was in attendance on the king he had 3l. 6s. 8d. per month.

I find from Fleckno's *Characters*, that Taylor died either in the year 1653 or in the following year¹: and according to Wright he was buried at Richmond. The Register of that parish antecedent to the Restoration, being lost, I am unable to ascertain that fact. He was probably near seventy years of age at the time of his death.

He is said by some to have painted the only original picture of Shakspeare now extant, in the possession of the duke of Chandos. By others, with more probability, Richard Burbadge is reported to have been the painter: for among the pictures in Dulwich college is one, which, in the catalogue made in the time of Charles the Second by Cartwright the player, is said to have been painted by Burbadge.

ROBERT BENFIELD

appears to have been a second-rate actor. He performed Antonio in *The Dutchess of Malfy*, after the death of Ostler. He

¹ *Hist. Histron.*

² Taylor's name does not occur in the list of actors printed by Jonson at the end of *Volpone*.

³ *Mf. Virtue.*

⁴ "He is one, who now the stage is down, acts the parasite's part at table; and, since Taylor's death, none can play Mosca so well as he." Character of one who imitates the good companion another way. In the edition of Fleckno's *Characters*, printed in 1665, he says, this character was written in 1654. Taylor was alive in 1652, having published *The Wild Goose Chase* in that year.

He also acted the part of the King in *The Deserving Favourite*; Ladislaus in *The Picture*; Junius Rusticus in *The Roman Actor*; and De-gard in *The Wild Goose Chase*.

He was alive in 1647, being one of the players who signed the dedication to the folio edition of Fletcher's plays, published in that year.

ROBERT GOUGHE.

This actor at an early period performed female characters, and was, I suppose, the father of *Alexander Goughe*, who in this particular followed Robert's steps. In *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Robert Goughe played Aspatia; but in the year 1611 he had arrived at an age which entitled him to represent male characters; for in *The Second Maidens Tragedie*², which was produced in that year, he performed the part of the usurping tyrant.

RICHARD ROBINSON

is said by Wright to have been a comedian. He acted in Jonson's *Catiline* in 1611; and, it should seem from a passage in *The Devil is an Ass*, [Act II. sc. viii.] 1616, that at that time he usually represented female characters. In *The Second Maidens Tragedie*, he represented the *Lady of Govianus*. I have not learned what parts in our author's plays were performed by this actor. In *The Deserving Favourite*, 1629, he played Orfinio; and in *The Wild Goose Chase* La-Caltre. In Massinger's *Roman Actor*, he performed *Ælopus*; and in *The Dutchess of Malfy*, after the retirement of Condell, he played the Cardinal. Hart, the celebrated actor, was originally his boy or apprentice. Robinson was alive in 1647, his name being signed, with several others, to the dedication prefixed to the first folio edition of Fletcher's plays. In the civil wars he served in the king's army, and was killed in an engagement, by Harrison, who was afterwards hanged at Charing-Cross. Harrison refused him quarter, after he had laid down his arms, and shot him in the head, saying at the same time, 'Curled is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently.'³

JOHN SHANCKE

was, according to Wright, a comedian. He was but in a low class, having performed the part of the Curate in Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, and that of Hillario (a servant) in *The Wild Goose Chase*. He was a dramatick author as well as an actor, having

² Ms. in the collection of the Marquis of Lansdown. See p. 6. n. 7.

³ *Hist. Histrion.* p. 8.

having produced a comedy entitled *Shanke's Ordinary*, which was acted at Blackfriars in the year 1623-4⁴.

JOHN RICE.

The only information I have met with concerning this player, is, that he represented the Marquis of Pescara, an inconsiderable part in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*. He was perhaps brother to Stephen Rice, clerk, who is mentioned in the will of John Heminge.

The foregoing list is said in the first folio to contain the names of the principal actors in these plays.

Beside these, we know that *John Wilson* played an insignificant part in *Much ado about nothing*.

Gabriel was likewise an inferior actor in these plays, as appears from the *Third Part of King Henry VI.* p. 150, edit. 1623, where we find—"Enter Gabriel." In the corresponding place in the old play entitled *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. we have—"Enter a Messenger." Sinkler or Sinco, and Humphrey⁵, were likewise players in the same theatre, and of the same class. William Barksted⁶, John Duke, and Christopher Beeston⁷, also belonged to this company. The latter from the year 1624 to 1638. when he died, was manager of the Cockpit theatre in Drury-lane.

In a book of the last age of no great authority, we are told that "the infamous *Hugh Peters*, after he had been expelled from the University of Cambridge, went to London, and enrolled himself as a player in Shakspeare's company, in which he usually performed the part of the Clown." Hugh Peter (for that was his name, not *Peters*, as he was vulgarly called by his contemporaries,) was born at Fowey or Foye in Cornwall in 1599, and was entered of Trinity College in Cambridge, in the year 1613. In 1617 he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and that of Master of Arts in 1622. On the 23d of December 1621, as I find from the Registry of the Bishop of London, he was ordained a deacon, by Dr. Mountaine then bishop of that see; and on June 8, 1623, he was ordained a priest. During his residence at Trinity college, he

⁴ "For the kings company. *Shankes Ordinarie*, written by Shankes himselfe, this 16 March, 1623,—*L. I. O. O.*" *Mf. Herbert*.

⁵ In *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* p. 158, first folio, the following stage-direction is found: "Enter Sinklo and Humphrey. In the old play in quarto, entitled *The true tragedie of Richard duke of Yorke*. "Enter two keepers."

⁶ He was one of the children of the Revels. See the *Dramatis Persona* of Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*.

⁷ *Dramatis Persona* of Every man in his humour.

he behaved so improperly, that he was once publicly whipped for his insolence and contumacy *; but I do not find that he was expelled. It is, however, not improbable that he was rusticated for a time, for some misconduct; and perhaps in that interval, instead of retiring to his parent's house in Cornwall, his restless spirit carried him to London, and induced him to tread the stage. If this was the case, it probably happened about the time of our author's death, when Hugh Peter was about eighteen years old.

Langhaine was undoubtedly mistaken in supposing that Edward Alleyn was "an ornament to Blackfriars." Wright, who was much better acquainted with the ancient stage, says, "he never heard that Alleyn acted there:" and the list in the first folio edition of our author's plays proves decisively that he was not of his company; for so celebrated a performer could not have been overlooked, when that list was forming. So early as in 1593, we find "Ned Alleyn's company mentioned †." Alleyn was sole proprietor and manager of the Fortune theatre, in which he performed from 1599 (and perhaps before) till 1616, when, I believe, he quitted the stage. He was servant to the Lord Admiral (Nottingham): all the old plays therefore which are said to have been performed by *the Lord Admiral's Servants*, were represented at the Fortune by Alleyn's company ‡.

THE

* Warton's Milton, p. 432.

† P. 166, n. 5.

‡ In a former edition I had said, on the authority of Mr. Oldys, that "Edward Alleyn, the player, mentions in his *Diary*, that he once had so slender an audience in his theatre called the *Fortune*, that the whole receipt of the house amounted to no more than three pounds and some odd shillings." But I have since seen Alleyn's *Diary*, (which was then mislaid,) and find Mr. Oldys was mistaken. The memorandum on which the intelligence conveyed by the Librarian of Dulwich College to that Antiquary, was founded, is as follows: "Oct. 3. 1617. I went to the Red Bull, and rd. for *The Younger Brother* but £. 3. 6. 4."

It appears from one of Lord Bacon's Letters that Alleyn had in 1618 left the stage. "Allen that *was* the player," he calls him. The money therefore which he mentions to have received for the play of *The Younger Brother*, must have been the produce of the second day's representation, in consequence of his having sold the property of that piece to the sharers in the Red Bull theatre, or being in some other way entitled to a benefit from it. Alleyn's own play-house, the Fortune, was then open, but I imagine, he had sold of his property in it to a kinsman, one Thomas Allen, an actor likewise. In his *Diary* he frequently mentions his going from Dulwich to London after dinner, and supping with him and some of "the Fortune's men." From this Mr. I expected to have learned several particulars relative to our ancient stage; but unluckily the *Diary* does not commence till the year 1617, (at which time he had retired to his College at Dulwich,) and contains no theatrical intelligence whatsoever, except the article already quoted.

THE history of the stage as far as it relates to Shakspeare, naturally divides itself into three periods: the period which preceded his appearance as an actor or dramatick writer; that during which he flourished; and the time which has elapsed since his death. Having now gone through the two former of these periods, I shall take a transient view of the stage from the death of our great poet to the year 1741, still with a view to Shakspeare, and his works.

Soon after his death, four of the principal companies then subsisting, made a union, and were afterwards called *the United Companies*; but I know not precisely in what this union consisted. I suspect it arose from a penury of actors, and that the managers contracted to permit the performers in each house occasionally to assist their brethren in the other theatres in the representation of plays. We have already seen that John Heminge in 1618 pay'd Sir George Buck, "*in the name of the four companies, for a lenten dispensation in the holydaies, 44s.*;" and Sir Henry Herbert observes that the play called *Come see a wonder*, "written by John Daye for a company of strangers," and represented Sept. 18, 1623, was "acted at the Red Bull, and, licensed without his hand to it, because they [*i. e.* this company of strangers] were none of the *four companies*." The old comedy entitled *Amends for Ladies*, as appears from its title-page, was acted at *Blackfriars* before the year 1618, "both by the *Prince's servants* and *Lady Elizabeth's*," though the theatre at Blackfriars then belonged to the king's servants.

After the death of Shakspeare, the plays of Fletcher appear for several years to have been more admired, or at least to have been more frequently acted, than those of our poet. During the latter part of the reign of James the First, Fletcher's pieces had the advantage of novelty to recommend them. I believe, between the time of Beaumont's death in 1615 and his own in 1625, this poet produced at least twenty-five plays. Sir Aston Cokain has informed us, in his poems, that of the thirty-five pieces improperly ascribed to Beaumont and Fletcher in the folio edition of 1647, much the greater part were written after Beaumont's death⁹: and his account is partly confirmed

- 9 " ————— For what a foul
 " And inexcusable fault it is, (*that whole*
 " *Volume of plays being almost every one*
 " *After the death of Beaumont writ,*) that none
 " Would certifie them so much?"

Verfes address'd by Sir Aston Cokain to Mr.
 Charles Cotton.

See

firmed by Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript, from which it appears that Fletcher produced eleven new plays in the last four years of his life. If we were possessed of the Register kept by Sir George Buck, we should there, I make no doubt, find near twenty dramas written by the same author in the interval between 1615 and 1622. As, to ascertain the share which each of these writers had in the works which have erroneously gone under their joint names, has long been a *desideratum* in dramattick history, I shall here set down as perfect a list as I have been able to form of the pieces produced by Fletcher in his latter years.

The Honest Man's Fortune, though it appeared first in the folio 1647, was one of the few pieces in that collection, which was the joint production of Beaumont and Fletcher. It was first performed at the Globe theatre in the year 1613, two years before the death of Beaumont*.

The Loyal Subject was the sole production of Fletcher, and was first represented in the year 1618.

It appears from Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript that the new plays which Fletcher had brought out in the course of the year, were generally presented at court at Christmas. As therefore *The Island Princess*, *The Pilgrim*, and *The Wild Goose Chase* are found among the court exhibitions of the year 1621, we need not hesitate to ascribe these pieces also to the same poet. *The Wild Goose Chase*, though absurdly printed under the joint names of Beaumont and Fletcher, is expressly ascribed to the latter by Lowin and Taylor, the actors who published it in 1652. *The Beggar's Bush*, being also acted at court in 1622, was probably written by Fletcher. *The Tamer tamed* is expressly call'd his by Sir Henry Herbert, as is the *Mad Lover* by Sir Aston Cokain: and it appears from the manuscript so often quoted that *The Night-Walker* and *Love's Pilgrimage*, having been left imperfect by Fletcher, were corrected and finished by Shirley.

I have now given an account of nine of the pieces in which Beaumont appears to have had no share; and subjoin a list of eleven other plays written by Fletcher, (with the assistance
of

See also his verses addressed to Mr. Humphry Moseley and Mr. Humphry Robinson:

- " In the large book of playes you late did print
- " In Beaumont and in Fletcher's name, why in't
- " Did you not justice? give to each his due?
- " For Beaumont of those many writ in few;
- " And Massinger in other few; *the main*
- " Being sole issues of sweet Fletcher's brain."

* A Manuscript copy of this play is now before me, marked 1613.

of Rowley in one only,) precisely in the order in which they were licensed by the Master of the Revels.

1622. May 14, he produced a new play called *The Prophetes*.
 June 22, *The Sea Voyage*. This piece was acted at the Globe.
 October 24, *The Spanish Curate*. Acted at Blackfriars.
1623. August 29, *The Maid of the Mill*, written by Fletcher and Rowley; acted at the Globe.
 October 17, *The Devill of Dowgate, or Usury put to use*. Acted by the king's servants. This piece is lost.
 Decemb. 6. *The Wandering Lovers*; acted at Blackfriars. This piece is also lost.
1624. May 27, *A Wife for a Month*. Acted by the King's Servants.
 Octob. 19. *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*.
- 1625-6. January 22. *The Fair Maid of the Inn*. Acted at Blackfriars.
 Feb. 3. *The Noble Gentleman*. Acted at the same theatre.

In a former page an account has been given of the court-exhibitions in 1622. In Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book I find the following "Note of such playes as were acted at court in 1623, and 1624," which confirms what I have suggested, that the plays of Shakspeare were then not so much admired as those of the poets of the day.

"Upon Michelmass night att Hampton court, *The Mayd of the Mill* by the K. Company.

"Upon Allhollows night at St. James, the prince being there only, *The Mayd of the Mill* againe, with reformationes.

"Upon the fifth of November att Whitehall, the prince being there only, *The Gypsie*, by the Cockpitt company.

"Upon St. Stevens daye, the king and prince being there, *The Mayd of the Mill* by the K. company. Att Whitehall.

"Upon St. Johns night, the prince only being there, *The Bondman* by the queene [of Bohemia's] company. Att Whitehall.

"Upon Innocents night, falling out upon a Sondag, *The Buck is a thief*, the king and prince being there. By the king's company. Att Whitehall.

"Upon New-years night, by the K. company, *The Wandering Lovers*, the prince only being there. Att Whitehall.

"Upon

" Upon the Sondag after, beinge the 4 of January 1623, by the Queene of Bohemias company, *The Changelinge*; the prince only being there. Att Whitehall.

" Upon Twelſe night, the maske being putt off, *More dissemblers besides Women* *, by the kings company, the prince only being there. Att Whitehall.

" To the Duchefs of Richmond, in the kings absence, was given *The Winters Tale*, by the K. company, the 18 Janu. 1623. Att Whitehall.

" Upon All-hollows night, 1624, the king beinge at Roiston, no play.

" The night after, my Lord Chamberlin had *Rule a Wife and have a wife* for the ladys, by the king's company.

" Upon St. Steevens night, the prince only being there, [was acted] *Rule a wife and have a wife*, by the king's company. Att Whitehall.

" Upon St. John's night, [the prince] and the duke of Brunſwick being there, *The Fox*, by the ——— Att Whitehall.

" Upon Innocents night, the [prince] and the duke of Brunſwyck being there, *Cupids Revenge*, by the Queen of Bohemias Servants. Att Whitehall, 1624.

" Upon New-years night, the prince only being there, The first part of *Sir John Falstaff*, by the king's company. Att Whitehall, 1624.

" Upon Twelve night, the Masque being putt off, and the prince only there, *Tu Quoque*, by the Queene of Bohemias servants. Att Whitehall, 1624.

" Upon the Sondag night following, being the ninthe of January, 1624, the Masque was performed.

" On Candlemas night the 2 February, no play, the king being att Newmarket."

From the time when Sir Henry Herbert came into the office of the Revels to 1642, when the theatres were shut up, his Manuscript does not furnish us with a regular account of the plays exhibited at court every year. Such, however, as he has given, I shall now subjoin, together with a few anecdotes which he has preserved, relative to some of the works of our poet and the dramattick writers who immediately succeeded him.

" For the king's players. An olde playe called *Winters Tale*, formerly allowed of by Sir George Bucke, and likewise by

* " The worst play that ere I saw," says the writer, in a marginal note.

by mee on Mr. Hemmings his worde that there was nothing prophane added or reformed, thogh the allowed booke was missinge; and therefore I returned itt without a fee, this 19 of August, 1623.

"For the king's company. *The Historye of Henry the First*¹, written by Dampont [Davenport]; this 10 April, 1624,—£. 1. 0. 0.

"For the king's company. An olde play called *The Honest Mans Fortune*, the originall being lost, was re-allowed by mee at Mr. Taylor's intreaty, and on condition to give mee a booke [*The Arcadia*], this 9 Februa. 1624."

The manuscript copy of the *Honest Man's Fortune* is now before me, and is dated 1613. It was therefore probably the joint production of Beaumont and Fletcher. This piece was acted at the Globe, and the copy which had been licensed by Sir George Buc, was without doubt destroyed by the fire which consumed that theatre in the year 1613. The allowed copy of *The Winter's Tale* was probably destroyed at the same time.

"17 July, 1626. [Received] from Mr. Hemmings for a courtesie done him about their Blackfriars hous, £. 3. 0. 0.

"[Received] from Mr. Hemming, in their company's name, to forbid the playing of Shakespeare's plays, to the Red Bull Company, this 11 of Aprill, 1627, £. 5. 0. 0.

"This day, being the 11 of Janu. 1630, I did refuse to allow of a play of Messinger's², because itt did contain dangerous

¹ This play in a late entry on the Stationers' books was ascribed by a fraudulent bookseller to Shakspeare.

² Massinger's *Duke of Millaine* and *Virgin Martyr* were printed in 1623. It appears from the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert that his other plays were produced in the following order:

The Bandinan, Dec. 3, 1623. Acted at the Cockpit in Drury Lane.

The Renegado, or the Gentleman of Venice, April 17, 1624. Acted at the Cockpitt.

The Parliament of Love, Nov. 3, 1624. Acted at the Cockpit. Of this play the last four acts are yet extant in manuscript.

The Spanish Viceroy, acted in 1624. This play is lost.

The Roman Actor, October 11, 1626. Acted by the king's company.

The Judge, June 6, 1627. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

The Great Duke was licenced for the Queen's Servants, July 5, 1627. This was, I apprehend, *The Great Duke of Florence*, which was acted by that company.

The Honour of Women was licenced May 6, 1628. I suspect that this was the original name of *The Maid of Honour*, which was printed in 1631, though not entered for the stage in Sir Henry Herbert's book.

The Picture, June 8, 1629. Acted by the king's company.

gerous matter, as the deposing of Sebastian king of Portugal, by Phillip the [Second,] and ther being a peace sworn twixt the kings of England and Spayne. I had my fee notwithstandinge, which belongs to me for the reading itt over, and ought to be brought always with the booke.

"Received of Knight³, for allowing of Ben Johnson's
play

Minerva's Sacrifice, Nov. 3, 1629. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

The Emperor of the East, March 11, 1630-31. Acted by the king's company.

Believe as you list, May 7, 1631. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

The Unfortunate Piety, June 13, 1631. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

The Fatal Dowry does not appear to have been licensed for the stage under that title, but was printed in 1632. It was acted by the king's company.

The City Madam, May 25, 1632. Acted by the king's company.

A new way to pay old debts does not appear to have been licensed for the stage, but was printed in Nov. 1632.

The Guardian was licensed, Octob. 31, 1633. Acted by the king's company.

The Tragedy of Cleander, May 7, 1634. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

A Very Woman, June 6, 1634. Acted by the king's company.

The Orator, Jan. 10, 1634-5. Acted by the king's company. This play is lost.

The Bashful Lover, May 9, 1636. Acted by the king's company.

The King and the Subject, June 5, 1638. Acted by the same company. This title, Sir Henry Herbert says, was changed. I suspect it was new named *The Tyrant*. The play is lost.

Alexius or the Chaste Lover, Sept. 25, 1639. Acted by the king's company.

The Fair Anchorets of Paufilippe, Jan. 26, 1639-40. Acted by the king's company.

Several other pieces by this author were formeely in possession of John Warburton, Esq. Somerset Herald, but I know not when they were written. Their titles are, *Antonio and Vallia*, *The Woman's Plot*, *Phileas and Hippolita*, *Taste and Welcome*.

³ The book-keeper of Blackfriars' playhouse. The date of this piece of Ben Jonson has hitherto been unascertained. Immediately after this entry is another, which accounts for the defect of several leaves in the edition of Lord Brooke's Poems, 1633: "Received from Henry Seyle for allowinge a booke of verses of my lord Brooks, entitled *Religion, Humane Learning*, Warr, and Honor, this 17 of October 1632, in mony, £. 1. 0. 0: in books to the value of £. 1. 4. 0."—In all the published copies twenty leaves on the subject of Religion, are wanting, having been cancelled, probably by the order of Archbishop Laud.

The subsequent entry ascertains the date of Cowley's earliest production:

"More of Seyle, for allowinge of two other small peeces of verses for the press, done by a boy of this town called COWLEY, at the same time, £. 0. 10. 0."

play called *Humours reconcil'd, or the Magnetick Lady*, to bee acted, this 12th of Octob. 1632, £. 2. 0. 0.

" 18 Nov. 1632. In the play of *The Ball*, written by Sherley⁴, and acted by the Queens players, ther were divers personated so naturally, both of lords and others of the court, that I took it ill, and would have forbidden the play, but that Biflon [Christopher Beeston] promiste many things which I found faulte withall should be left out, and that he would not suffer it to be done by the poett any more, who deserves to be punisht; and the first that offends in this kind, of poets or players, shall be sure of publique punishment.

" R. for allowinge of *The Tale of the Tubb*, Vitru Hoop's parte wholly strucke out, and the motion of the tubb, by commande from my lord chamberlin; exceptions being taken against it by Inigo Jones, surveyor of the kings workes, as a personall injury unto him. May 7, 1633,—£. 2. 0. 0."

In this piece, of which the precise date was hitherto unknown, *Vitru Hoop*, i. e. *Vitruvius Hoop*, undoubtedly was intended to represent Inigo Jones.

" The comedy called *The Yonge Admirall*, being free from oaths, prophaneſs, or obſceanes, hath given mee much delight and

⁴ Such of the plays of Shirley as were registered by Sir Henry Herbert, were licensed in the following order:

Love Tricks, with Complements, Feb. 10, 1624-5.

Mayds Revenge, Feb. 9, 1625-6.

The Brothers, Nov. 4, 1626.

The Witty Fair one, October 3, 1628.

The Faithful Servant, Nov. 3, 1629.

The Traytor, May 4, 1631.

The Duke, May 17, 1631.

Loves Cruelty, Nov. 14, 1631.

The Changes, Jan. 10, 1631-2.

Hyde Park, April 20, 1632.

The Ball, Nov. 16, 1632.

The Bewties, Jan. 21, 1632-3.

The Young Admiral, July 3, 1633.

The Gamester, Nov. 11, 1633.

The Example, June 24, 1634.

The Opportunity, Nov. 29, 1634.

The Coronation, Feb. 6, 1634-5.

Cbabot, Admiral of France, April 29, 1635.

The Lady of Pleasure, Octob. 15, 1635.

The Dukes Mistress, Jan. 18, 1635-6.

The Royal Master, April 23, 1638.

The Gentleman of Venice, 30 Octob. 1639.

Rosania, 1 June, 1640.

The Impostor, Nov. 10, 1640.

The Politique Father, May 26, 1641.

The Cardinall, Nov. 25, 1641.

The Sisters, April 26, 1642.

and satisfaction in the readinge, and may serve for a patterne to other poetts, not only for the bettring of maners and language, but for the improvement of the quality, which hath received some brushings of late.

"When Mr. Sherley hath read this approbation, I know it will encourage him to pursue this beneficial and cleanly way of poetry, and when other poetts heare and see his good success, I am confident they will imitate the original for their own credit, and make such copies in this harmless way, as shall speak them masters in their art, at the first sight, to all judicious spectators. It may be acted this 3 July, 1633.

"I have entered this allowance, for direction to my successor, and for example to all poetts, that shall write after the date hereof.

"Received of Biston, for an ould play called *Hymens Holiday*, newly revived at their house, being a play given unto him for my use, this 15 Aug. 1633, £. 3. 0. 0. Received of him for some alterations in it £. 1. 0. 0.

"Meetinge with him at the ould exchange, he gave my wife a payre of gloves, that cost him at least twenty shillings.

"Upon a second petition of the players to the High Commission court, wherein they did mee right in my care to purge their plays of all offense, my lords Grace of Canterbury bestowed many words upon mee, and discharged mee of any blame, and layd the whole fault of their play called *The Magick Lady*, upon the players. This happened the 24 of Octob. 1633, at Lambeth. In their first petition they would have excused themselves on mee and the poet."

"On Saterday the 17th of Novemb.⁵, being the Queens birth day, *Richard the Thirde* was acted by the K. players at St. James, wher the king and queene were present, it being the first play the queene sawe since her M.^{ty}s delivery of the Duke of York. 1633.

"On tuesday the 19th of November, being the king's birth-day, *The Yong Admirall* was acted at St. James by the queen's players, and likt by the K. and Queen.

"The Kings players sent mee an ould booke of Fletchers called *The Loyal Subject*, formerly allowed by Sir George Bucke, 16 Novemb. 1618, which according to their desire and agreement I did peruse, and with some reformatiōs allowed of, the 23 of Nov. 1633, for which they sent mee according to their promise £. 1. 0. 0.⁶.

"On

⁵ This is a mistake It should be the 16th of November. She was born Nov. 16, 1609.

⁶ In the margin the writer adds—"The First ould play sent mee to be perused by the K. players."

OF THE ENGLISH STAGE. 193

" On tuesday night at St. James, the 26 of Novemb. 1633, was acted before the King and Queene, *The Taminge of the Shrew*. Liket.

" On thursday night at St. James, the 28 of Novemb. 1633, was acted before the King and Queene, *The Tamer Tamd*, made by Fletcher. Very well likt.

" On tuesday night at Whitehall the 10 of Decemb. 1633, was acted before the King and Queen, *The Loyal Subject*, made by Fletcher, and very well likt by the king.

" On Monday night the 16 of December, 1633, at Whitehall was acted before the King and Queen, *Hymens Holliday* or *Cupids Fegarys*, an ould play of Rowleys. Likte.

" On Wensday night the first of January, 1633, *Cymbeline* was acted at Court by the Kings players. Well likte by the kinge.

" On Monday night the sixth of January and the Twelwe Night, was presented at Denmark-house, before the King and Queene, Fletchers pastorall called *The Faithfull Shep-herdesse*, in the clothes the Queene had given Taylor the yeare before of her owne pastorall.

" The scenes were fitted to the pastorall, and made, by Mr. Inigo Jones, in the great chamber, 1633.

" This morning being the 9th of January, 1633, the kinge was pleas'd to call mee into his withdrawinge chamber to the windowe, wher he went over all that I had crosse in Davenants play-booke, and allowing of *faith* and *slight* to bee asseverations only, and no oathes, markt them to stande, and some other few things, but in the greater part allowed of my reformatiōs. This was done upon a complaint of Mr. Endymion Porters in December.

" The kinge is pleas'd to take *faith*, *death*, *slight*, for asseverations, and no oathis, to which I doe humbly submit as my masters judgment; but under favour conceive them to be oaths, and enter them here, to declare my opinion and submission.

" The 10 of January, 1633, I returned unto Mr. Davenant his play-booke of *The Witts*, corrected by the kinge.

" The kinge would not take the booke at Mr. Porters hands; but commanded him to bring it unto mee, which he did, and likewise commanded Davenant to come to mee for it, as I believe; otherwise he would not have byn so civill.

" *The Guardian*, a play of Mr. Messengers, was acted at court-on Sunday the 12 January, 1633, by the King's players, and well likte.

VOL. II.

K

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⁷ In a small tract of the last age, of which I have forgot the title, we are told, that Charles the Second, being reprimanded by one of his bishops for frequently introducing profane oaths in his discourse, defended himself by saying, " Your martyr swore twice more than I do."

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" *The Tale of the Tub* was acted on tuesday night at Court, the 14 Janua. 1633, by the Queenes players, and not likt.

" *The Winters Tale* was acted on thursday night at Court, the 16 Janu. 1633, by the K. players, and likt.

" *The Wins* was acted on tuesday night the 28 January, 1633, at Court, before the Kinge and Queene. Well likt. It had a various fate on the stage, and at court, though the kinge commended the language, but dislikt the plott and characters.

" *The Night-Walkers* was acted on thursday night the 30 Janu. 1633, at Court, before the King and Queen. Likt as a merry play. Made by Fletcher^s.

" The Inns of court gentlemen presented their masque at court, before the kinge and queene, the 2 February, 1633, and performed it very well. Their shew through the streets was glorious, and in the nature of a triumph.—Mr. Surveyor Jones invented and made the scene; Mr. Sherley the poet made the prose and verse.

" On thursday night the 6 of Febru. 1633, *The Gamester* was acted at Court, made by Sherley, out of a plot of the king's, given him by mee; and well likt. The king sayd it was the best play he had seen for seven years.

" On Shrovetuesday night, the 18 of February, 1633, the Kinge danct his Masque, accompanied with 11 lords, and attended with 10 pages. It was the noblest masque of my time to this day, the best poetrye, best scenes, and the best habits. The kinge and queene were very well pleas'd with my service, and the Q. was pleas'd to tell mee before the king, * Pour les habits, elle n'avoit jamais rien veu de si brave."

" *Buffy d'Amboyse* was playd by the king's players on Easter-munday night, at the Cockpitt in court.

" *The Pastorall* was playd by the king's players on Easter-tuesday night, at the Cockpitt in court.

" I committed Cromes, a broker in Longe Lane, the 16 of Febru. 1634, to the Marshalsey, for lending a church-robe with the name of Jesus upon it to the players in Salisbury Court, to present a Flamen, a priest of the heathens. Upon his petition of submission, and acknowledgment of his faulte, I releas'd him, the 17 Febr. 1634.

" The Second part of *Arviragus and Philicia* played at court the 16 Febr. 1635, with great approbation of K. and Queene.

" *The*

* In a former page the following entry is found:

" For a play of Fletchers corrected by Sherley, called *The Night Walkers*, the 11 May, 1633, L. 2. O. O. For the queen's players."

OF THE ENGLISH STAGE. 195

"*The Silent Woman* playd at Court of St. James on thurs- day y^e 18 Febr. 1635.

"On Wensday the 23 of Febr. 1635, the Prince d'Amours gave a masque to the Prince Elector and his brother, in the Middle Temple, when the Queene was pleas'd to grace the entertaynement by putting of majesty, to putt on a citizens habitt, and to sett upon the scaffold on the right hande amongst her subjects.

"The queene was attended in the like habits by the Marques Hamilton, the Countess of Denbighe, the Countess of Holland, and the Lady Elizabeth Feilding. Mrs. Basse, the law-woman *, leade in this royal citizen and her company.

"The Earle of Holland, the Lord Goringe, Mr. Percy, and Mr. Je. myn, were the men that attended.

"The Prince Elector satt in the midst, his brother Robert on the right hand of him, and the Prince d'Amours on the left.

"The Masque was very well performed in the dances, scenes, cloathing, and musique, and the Queene was pleas'd to tell mee at her going away, that she liked it very well.

"Henry Laune } made the musique.

"William Laune }

"Mr. Corfeilles made the scenes.

"*Love's Aftergame*?, played at St. James by the Salisbury Court players, the 24 of Feb. 1635.

"*The Duke's Mistress* played at St. James the 22 of Feb. 1635. Made by Sherley.

"The same day at Whitehall I acquainted king Charles, my master, with the danger of Mr. Hunts sickness, and moved his Majesty, in case he dyed, that he would bee pleas'd to give mee leave to commend a fitt man to succcede him in his place of Yeoman of the Revells.

"The kinge told mee, that till then he knew not that Will Hunt held a place in the Revells. To my request he was pleas'd to give mee this answer. Well, says the kinge I will not dispose of it, or, it shall not be disposed of, till I heare you. *Ipssimus verbis.* Which I enter here as full of grace, and for my better remembrance, since my master's custom affords not so many words, nor so significant.

"The 28 Feb. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* playd by the Q. men at St. James.

"K 2 of this, 1635. The

"i. e. the woman who had the care of the hall belonging to the Middle Temple.

"*The Proxy, or Love's Aftergame*, was produced at the theatre at Salisbury Court, November 24, 1634.

" The first and second part of *Arviragus* and *Philicia* were acted at the Cockpitt, [Whitehall] before the King and Queene, the Prince, and Prince Elector, the 18 and 19 April, 1636, being monday and tuesday in Easter weeke.

" At the increase of the plague to 4 within the city and 54 in all.—This day the 12 May, 1636, I received a warrant from my lord Chamberlin for the suppressing of playes and shews, and at the same time delivered my severall warants to George Wilson for the four companys of players, to be served upon them.

" At Hampton Court, 1636.

" The first part of *Arviragus*, Monday Afternoon, 26 Decemb.

" The second part of *Arviragus*, tuesday 27 Decemb.

" *Love and Honour*, on New-years night, sonday.

" *The Elder Brother*, on thursday the 5 Janua.

" *The Kinge and no Kinge*, on tuesday y^e 10 Janua.

" *The Royal Slave*, on thursday the 12 of Janu.—Oxford play, written by Cartwright. The king gave him forty pounds.

" *Rollo*, the 24 Janu.

" *Julius Caesar*, at St. James, the 31 Janu. 1636.

" *Cupides Revenge*, at St. James, by Beeston's boyes, the 7 Febru.

" *A wife for a monthe*, by the K. players, at St. James, the 9 Febru.

" *Wit without money*, by the B. boyes, at St. James, the 14 Feb.

" *The Governor*, by the K. players, at St. James, the 17 Febru. 1636.

" *Philaster*, by the K. players, at St. James, Shrovtuesday, the 21 Febru. 1636.

" On thursday morning the 23 of February the bill of the plague made the number at forty foure, upon which decrease the king gave the players their liberty, and they began the 24 February 1636. [1636-7.]

" The plague encreasinge, the players laye still untill the 1 of October, when they had leave to play.

" Mr. Beeston was commanded to make a company of boyes, and began to play at the Cockpitt with them the same day.

" I disposed of Perkins, Sumner, Sherlock and Turner, to Salisbury Court, and joynd them with the best of that company.

" Received of Mr. Lowens for my paines about Mellinger's play called *The King and the Subject*, 2 June, 1638, £. i. o. o.

" The

OF THE ENGLISH STAGE. 19

"The name of *The King and the Subject* is altered, and I allowd the play to bee acted, the reformations most strictly observed, and not otherwise, the 5th of June, 1638.

"At Greenwich the 4 of June, Mr. W. Murray gave mee power from the king to allowe of the play, and tould me that hee would warant it.

"Monys? Wee'le rayse supplies, what ways we please,

"And force you to subscribe to blanks, in which

"Wee'le mulct you as wee shall think fitt. The Czars

"In Rome were wise, acknowledging no lawes

"But what their swords did ratifye, the wives

"And daughters of the senators bowinge to

"Their wils, as deities," &c.

"This is a peece taken out of Phillip Messingers play, called *The King and the Subject*, and enterd here for ever to bee remembered by my son and those that cast their eyes on it, in honour of Kinge Charles, my master, who, readinge over the play at Newmarket, set his marke upon the place with his own hande, and in thes words:

"*This is too insolent, and to bee changed.*"

"Note, that the poet makes it the speech of a king, Don Pedro king of Spayne, and spoken to his subjects.

"On thursday the 9 of Aprill, 1640, my Lord Chamberlen bestow'd a play on the Kinge and Queene, called *Clement Queen of Arragon*, made by my cousin Abington. It was performed by my lords servants out of his owne family, and his charge in the cloathes and scenes, which were very rich and curious. In the hall at Whitehall.

"The king and queene commended the generall entertaynement, as very well acted, and well sett out.

"It was acted the second tyme in the same place before the king and queene.

"At Easter 1640, the Princes company went to the Fortune, and the Fortune company to the Red Bull.

"On Monday the 4 May, 1640, William Beeston was taken by a messenger, and committed to the Marshalsey, by my Lord Chamberlens warant, for playinge a play without license. The same day the company at the Cockpitt was commanded by my Lord Chamberlens warant to forbear playinge, for playinge when they were forbidden by mee, and for other disobedience, and laye still Monday, tuesday, and wensday. On thursday at my Lord Chamberlens entreaty I gave them their liberty, and upon their petition of submission subscribed by the players, I restored them to their liberty on thursday.

"The

"The play I cald for, and, forbiddinge the playinge of it, keepe the booke, because it had relation to the passages of the K.s journey into the Northe, and was employned of by his M.^{ty} to mete with commande to punishe the offenders.

"On Twelfe Night, 1641, the prince had a play called *The Scornful Lady*, at the Cockpitt, but the kinge and queene were not there; and it was the only play acted at courte in the whole Christmas.

"[1642. June.] Received of Mr. Kirke for a new play which I burnt for the ribaldry and offense that was in it, £. 2. 0. 0.

"Received of Mr. Kirke for another new play called *The Irishe Rebellion*, the 8 June, 1642, £. 2. 0. 0.

"Here ended my allowance of plaies, for the war began in Aug. 1642."

"Sir William D'Avenant, we have already seen", about sixteen months after the death of Ben Jonson, obtained from his majesty (Dec. 13, 1638) a grant of an annuity of one hundred pounds *per ann.* which he enjoyed as poet laureat till his death. In the following year (March 26, 1639) a patent passed the great seal authorizing him to erect a playhouse, which was then intended to have been built behind *The Three Kings Ordinary* in Fleet-Street; but this scheme was not carried into execution. I find from a Manuscript in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, that after the death of Christopher Beeston, Sir W. D'Avenant was appointed by the Lord Chamberlain, (June 27, 1639) "Governor of the King and Queens company acting at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, during the lease which Mrs. Elizabeth Beeston, *alias* Hutcheson, hath or doth hold in the said house;" and I suppose he appointed her son Mr. William Beeston his deputy, for from Sir Henry Herbert's office-book, he appears for a short time to have had the management of that theatre.

In the latter end of the year 1659, some months before the Restoration of K. Charles II. the theatres, which had been been suppressed during the usurpation, began to revive, and several plays were performed at the Red Bull in St. John's-street, in that and the following year, before the return of the king. In June 1660, three companies seem to have been formed; that already mentioned; one under Mr. William Beeston in Salisbury Court; and one at the Cockpit in Drury Lane under Mr. Rhodes, who had been wardrobe-keeper at the theatre in Blackfriars before the breaking out of the Civil Wars. Sir Henry Herbert, who still retained his office

of Master of the Revels, endeavoured to obtain from these companies the same emoluments which he had formerly derived from the exhibition of plays; but after a long struggle, and after having brought several actions at law against Sir William D'Avenant, Mr. Betterton, Mr. Mohun, and others, he was obliged to relinquish his claims, and his office ceased to be attended with either authority or profit. It received its death's wound from a grant from King Charles II. under the privy signet, August 21, 1660, authorizing Mr. Thomas Killigrew, one of the grooms of his Majesty's bedchamber, and Sir William D'Avenant, to erect two new playhouses and two new companies, of which they were to have the regulation; and prohibiting any other theatrical representation in London, Westminster, or the suburbs, but those exhibited by the said two companies.

Among the papers of Sir Henry Herbert several are preserved relative to his disputed claim, some of which I shall here insert in their order, as containing some curious and hitherto unknown particulars relative to the stage at this time, and and also as illustrative of its history at a precedent period.

I.

" For Mr. William Beeston.

" Whereas the allowance of plays, the ordering of players and playmakers, and the permission for erecting of playhouses, hath, time out of minds whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary, belonged to the Master of his Ma^{ties} office of the Revells: And whereas Mr. William Beeston hath desired authority and lycence from mee to continue the house called Salisbury Court playhouse in a playhouse, which was formerly built and erected into a playhouse by the permission and lycence of the Master of the Revells.

" These are therefore by virtue of a grant under the great seal of England, and of the constant practice thereof, to continue and constitute the said house called Salisbury Court playhouse into a playhouse, and to authorize and lycence the said Mr. Beeston to lett, lett, or use it for a playhouse, wherein comedies, tragedies, tragicomedies, pastoralls and interludes, may be acted. Provided that noe persons be admitted to act in the said playhouse but such as shall be allowed by the Master of his Ma^{ties} office of the Revells. Given under my hand and seale at the office of the Revells, this _____."

[This

[This paper appears to be only a copy, and is not dated nor signed; ending as above. I believe, it was written in June 1660.]

II.

“ To the kings most excellent Majesty,

“ The humble Petition of John Rogers,

“ Most humbly sheweth,

“ That your petitioner at the beginning of the late calamity lost thereby his whole estate, and during the warr susteyned much detriment and imprisonment, and lost his limbs or the use thereof; who served his Excellency the now Lord General, both in England and Scotland, and performed good and faithfull service; in consideration whereof and by being soe much decreapitt as not to act any more in the wars, his Excellency was favourably pleased, for your petitioners future subsistence without being further burthenfome to this kingdom, or to your Majesty for a pension, to grant him a tolleration to erect a playhouse or to have a share out of them already tollerated, your petitioner thereby undertaking to suppress all riots, tumults, or molestations that may thereby arise. And for that the said graunt remains imperfect unless corroborated by your majesty.

“ He therefore humbly implores your most sacred Majesty, in tender compassion, out of your kingly clemency to confirm unto him a share out of the profitts of the said playhouses, or such allowance by them to be given as formerly they used to allow to persons for to keep the peace of the same, that he may with his wife and family be thereby preserved and relieved in his maimed aged years, and he shall daily pray.”

At the Court at Whitehall, the 7th of August, 1660.

“ His Majesty is graciously pleased to refer this petition to Sir Henry Herbert, Master of his Majesties Revells, to take such order therein, as shall be agreeable to equity, without further troubling his majesty.

“ (A true Copie.)

J. HOLLIS.”

“ August 20, 1660. From the office of the Revells.

“ In obedience to his M^{ties} command I have taken the matter of the Petitioners request into consideration, and doe thereuppon

thereupon conceive it very reasonable that the petitioner should have the same allowance weekly from you and every of you, for himselfe and his men*, for guarding your playhouses from all molestations and injuries, which you formerly did or doe allow or pay to other persons for the same or such like services; and that it be duly and truly paid him without denial. And the rather for that the King's most excellent Ma.^{tie} upon the Lord General Monks recommendation, and the consideration of the Petitioners losses and sufferings, hath thought fitt to commiserate the Petitioner John Rogers his said condition, and to refer unto me the relief of the said petitioner. Given at his Ma.^{ties} office of the Revells, under my hand and the seale of the said office, the twentieth day of August, in the twelve yeare of his Ma.^{ties} raigne.

"To the Actors at the Playhouses called the Red Bull, Cockpit, and theatre in Salisbury Court, and to every of them, in and about the citties of London and Westminster."

III.

"To the kings most excellent Majestie.

"The humble petition of Sir Henry Herbert, Knight, Master of your Majesties office of the Revells.

"Sheweth,

"That whereas your Petitioner by vertue of severall Grants under the great seale of England hath executed the said office, as Master of the Revells, for about 40 yeares, in the times of King James, and of King Charles, both of blessed memory, with exception only to the time of the late horrid rebellion.

"And whereas the ordering of playes and playmakers and the permission for erecting of playhouses are peculiar branches of the said office, and in the constant practice thereof by your petitioners predecessors in the said office and himselfe, with exception only as before excepted, and authorized by grante under the said greate seale of England; and that no person or persons have erected any playhouses, or rayed any company of players, without licence from your petitioners said predecessors or from your petitioner, but Sir William D'Avenant, Knight, who obtained leave of Oliver and Richard Cromwell to vent his operas, at a time when your petitioner owned not their authority.

K 5

"And

* It appears from another paper that his men were soldiers.

"And whereas your Majesty hath lately signified your pleasure by warrant to Sir Jeffery Palmer, Knight and Bar. your Majesties Attorney General, for the drawing of a grante for your Majesties signature to pass the greates seale, thereby to enable and empower Mr. Thomas Killegrew and the said Sir William D'Avenant to erect two new playhouses in London, Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, and to make choice of two companies of players to bee under their sole regulation, and that no other players shall be authorized to play in London, Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, but such as the said Mr. Killegrew and Sir William D'Avenant shall allow of.

"And whereas your petitioner hath been represented to your Ma.^{ty} as a person consenting unto the said powers expressed in the said warrant. Your petitioner utterly denies the least consent or fore-knowledge thereof, but looks upon it as an unjust surprize, and destructive to the power granted under the said greates seale to your petitioner, and to the constant practice of the said office, and exercised in the office ever since players were admitted by authority to act plays, and cannot legally be done as your petitioner is advised; and it may be of very ill consequence, as your petitioner is advised, by a new grante to take away and cut of a branch of your ancient powers, granted to the said office under the great seale.

"Your petitioner therefore humbly prays that your Ma.^{ty} would be justly as graciously pleased to revoke the said warrant from your Ma.^{ties} said Attorney General, or to refer the premises to the consideration of your Ma.^{ties} said Attorney General, to certify your Ma.^{ty} of the truth of them, and his judgement on the whole matters in question betwixt the said Mr. Killigrew, Sir William D'Avenant, and your petitioner, in relation to the legality and consequence of their demands and your petitioners rights.

"And your petitioner shall ever pray."

"At the Court at Whitehall, 4 August, 1660.

"His Ma.^{tie} is pleased to refer this petition to Sir Jeffery Palmer, Knight and Baronet, his Ma.^{ties} Attorney General; who having called before him all persons concerned, and examined the petitioners right, is to certify what he finds to be the true state of the matters in difference, together with his opinion thereupon. And then his M.^{tie} will declare his further pleasure.

EDW. NICHOLAS"

"May

" May it please your most excellent Ma.^{ty}.

" Although I have heard the parties concerned in this petition severally and apart, yet in respect Mr. Killigrew and Sir William D'Avenant, having notice of a time appointed to heare all parties together, did not come, I have forborne to proceed further; having also received an intimation, by letter from Sir William D'Avenant, that I was freed from further hearing this matter.

" 14 Sept. 1660.

J. PALMER."

IV.

" From Mr. Mosely concerning the playes, &c.

August 30, 1660¹.

" Sir,

" I have beene very much solicited by the gentlemen actors of the Red Bull for a note under my hand to certifie unto your worsh^{ps}. what agreement I had made with Mr. Rhodes of the Cockpitt playhouse. Truly, Sir, I am so far from any agreement with him, that I never so much as treated with him, nor with any from him, neither did I ever consent directly or indirectly, that hee or any others should act any playes that doe belong to mee, without my knowledge and consent had and procured. And the same also I doe certify concerning the Whitefryers playhouse² and players.

Sir, this is all I have to trouble you withall att present, and therefore I shall take the boldnesse to remaine,

Your Worsh.^{ps} most humble Servant,

HUMPHREY MOSELY.

August 30. 60².

V.

On the 21st of August, 1660, the following grant, against which Sir Henry Herbert had petitioned to be heard, passed the privy signet.

" Charles the Second by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, King, defender of the fayth, &c. to all to whome these presents shall come greeting. Whereas wee are given to understand that certain persons in and about our citty of London, or the suburbs thereof, doe frequently assemble for the performing and acting of playes and enterludes for rewards, to which divers of our subjects doe for their entertainment resort; which said playes, as we are

¹ This is the indorsement, written by Sir Henry Herbert's own hand.

² i. e. the playhouse in Salisbury Court.

³ The date inserted by Sir Henry Herbert.

are informed, doe containe much matter of prophanation and scurrility, soe that such kind of entertainments, which if well managed, might serve as morall instructions in humane life, as the same are now used, doe for the most part tende to the debauchinge of the manners of such as are present at them, and are very scandalous and offensive to all pious and well disposed persons. We, takeing the premisses into our princely consideration, yet not holding it necessary totally to suppress the use of theaters, because wee are assured, that, if the evill and scandall in the playes that now are or haue bin acted were taken away, the same might serue as inuocent and harmlesse diuertisement for many of our subjects; and haueing experience of the art and skill of our trusty and well beloved Thomas Killigrew, esq. one of the Groomes of our Bed-chamber, and of Sir William Dauenant, knight, for the purposes hereafter mentioned, doe hereby giue and grante vnto the said Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Dauenant full power and authority to erect two companies of players, consistinge respectively of such persons as they shall chuse and appoint, and to purchase, builde and erect, or hire at their charge, as they shall thinke fitt, two houses or theatres, with all convenient roomes and other necessities thereunto appertaining, for the representation of tragydies, comedyes, playes, operas, and all other entertainments of that nature, in convenient places: and likewise to settle and establish such payments to be paid by those that shall resort to see the said representations performed, as either haue bin accustomedly giuen and taken in the like kind, or as shall be reasonable in regard of the great expences of SCENES, musick, and such new decorations as haue not bin formerly used; with further power to make such allowances out of that which they shall so receiue, to the actors, and other persons employed in the said representations in both houses respectively, as they shall think fitt: the said companies to be under the government and authority of them the said Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Dauenant. And in regard of the extraordinary licentiousness that hath been lately used in things of this nature, our pleasure is, that there shall be noe more places of representations, nor companies of actors of playes or operas by recitative, musick, or representations by danceing and scenes, or any other entertainments on the stage, in our citties of London and Westminster, or in the liberties of them, then the two to be now erected by vertue of this authority. Nevertheless wee doe hereby by our authority royal strictly enioine the said Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Dauenant, that they doe not at any time hereafter cause to be acted or represented any play, enterlude, or opera, containing any matter of prophanation, scurrility or obscenity: And wee doe further hereby authorize and command

mand them the said Thomas Killegrew and Sir William Dauenant to peruse all playes that haue been formerly written, and to expunge all prophaneſſe and ſcurrility from the ſame, before they be repreſented or acted. And this our grante and authority made to the ſaid Thomas Killegrew and Sir William Dauenant, ſhall be effectuell and remaine in full force and vertue, notwithstanding any former order or direction by us given, for the ſuppreſſing of playhouſes and playes, or any other entertainments of the ſtage. Given, &c. Auguſt 21, 1660."

VI.

The following paper is indorſed by Sir Henry Herbert:

"Warrant ſent to Rhodes, and brought backe by him the 10 of Octob. 60, with this answer—
That the Kinge did authorize him."

"Whereas by vertue of a grante under the great ſeale of England, playes, players and playmakers, and the permiſſion for erecting of playhouſes, have been allowed, ordered and permitted by the Maſters of his Ma^{ties} office of the Revells, my predeceſſors ſucceſſively, time out of minde; whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary, and by mee for almoſt forty yeares, with exception only to the late times:

"Theſe are therefore in his Ma^{ties} name to require you to attend mee concerning your playhouſe called the Cockpitt playhouſe in Drury Lane, and to bring with you ſuch authority as you have for erecting of the ſaid houſe into a playhouſe, at your perill. Given at his Ma^{ties} office of the Revells the 8th day of Octob. 1660.

HENRY HERBERT."

"To Mr. John Rhodes at the Cockpitt playhouſe in Drury Lane."

VII.

Copy of the Warrant ſent to the actors at the Cockpitt in Drury Lane by Tom Browne, the 13 Octob. 60.

"Whereas ſeverall complaints have been made againſt you to the Kings moſt excellent Maieſty by Mr. Killegrew and Sir William D'Avenant, concerning the unuſuall and unreaſonable rates taken at your playhouſe-doores, of the reſpective perſons of quality that deſire to reſreſh or improve themſelves by the ſight of your morrall entertainments which were conſtituted for profit and delight. And the ſaid complaints made uſe of by the ſaid Mr. Killegrew and Sir William Davenant

as part of their suggestions for their pretended power, and for your late restraints.

“ And whereas complaints have been made thereof formerly to mee, wherewith you were acquainted, as innovations and exactions not allowed by mee; and that the like complaints are now made, that you doe practice the said exactions in takeing of excessive and unaccustomed rates uppon the restitution of you to your liberty.

“ These are therefore in his Ma^{ties} name to require you and every of you to take from the persons of qualitie and others as daily frequent your play-houſe, ſuch uſuall and accustomed rates only as were formerly taken at the Blackſryers by the late company of actors there, and noe more nor otherwiſe, for every new or old play that ſhall be allowed you by the Maſter of the Revells to be acted in the ſaid playhouſe or any other playhouſe. *And you are hereby further required to bringe or ſende to me all ſuch old plaies as you doe intend to act at your ſaid playhouſe, that they may be reformed of prophanes and ribaldry, at your perill.* Given at the office of the Revells³,

HENRY HERBERT.”

“ To Mr. Michael Mohun and the
reſt of the actors of the Cockpitt
playhouſe in Drury Lane. The
13th of October, 1660.”

VIII.

“ To the Kings moſt excellent Maſtie.

“ The humble Petition of Michael Mohun, Robert Shatterel, Charles Hart, Nich. Burt, Wm. Cartwright, Walter Clun, and William Winterſell.

“ Humbly ſheweth,

“ That your Maſties humble petitioners, having been ſuppreſt by a warrant from your Maſtie, Sir Henry Herbert informed us it was Mr. Killegrew had cauſed it, and if wee would give him ſoe much a weeke, he would protect them againſt Mr. Killegrew and all powers. The complaint againſt us was, ſcandalous plays, raiſing the price, and acknowledging noe authority; all which ended in ſoe much per weeke to him, for which wee had leave to play and promiſe of his protection: the which your Maſtie knows he was not able
to

³ The words in Italic characters were added by Sir Henry Herbert's own hand.

to performe, since Mr. Killegrew, having your Majesties former grante, suppress'd us, untill wee had by covenant oblig'd ourselves to act with woemen, a new theatre, and habits according to our scenes. And according to your Majesties approbation, from all the companies we made election of one company; and so farre Sir Henry Herbert hath bene from protecting us, that he hath been a continual disturbance unto us, who were [united] by your Majesties commande under Mr. Killegrew as Master of your Majesties Comedians; and wee have annext unto our petition the date of the warrant by which we were suppress'd, and for a protection against that warrant he forced from us, for much a weeke. And if your majestie be graciously pleas'd to cast your eye upon the date of the warrant hereto annext, your majestie shall find the date to our contract succeeded; wherein he hath broke the covenants, and not your petitioners, having abused your majestie in giving an ill character of your petitioners, only to force a sum from their poore endeavours; who never did nor shall refuse him all the resects and just profits that belong to his place; hee having now obtained leave to arrest us, only to give trouble and vexation to your petitioners, hoping by that meanes to force a summe of money illegally from us.

"The premises considered, your petitioners humbly beseech your majestie to be graciously pleas'd to signify your royal pleasure to the Lord Chamberlaine, that your petitioners may not bee molested in their calling. And your petitioners in duty bound shall pray, &c.

"Nich. Burt.

William Winterhall.

Charles Hart."

"Robt. Shatterell."

Mr. Thomas Betterton, having been a great admirer of Shakspeare, and having taken the trouble in the beginning of this century, when he was above seventy years of age, of travelling to Stratford-upon-Avon to collect materials for Mr. Rowe's life of our author, is entitled to particular notice from an editor of his works. Very inaccurate accounts of this actor have been given in the *Biographia Britannica* and several other books. It is observable that biographical writers often give the world long dissertations concerning facts and dates, when the fact contested might at once be ascertained by visiting a neighbouring parish-church: and this has been particularly

Michael Mohan, William Cartwright, and Walter Clun did not sign

particularly the case of Mr. Betterton. He was the son of Matthew Betterton (under-cook to King Charles the First) and was baptized, as I learn from the register of St. Margaret's parish, August 11. 1635. He could not have appeared on the stage in 1656, as has been asserted, no theatre being then allowed. His first appearance was at the Cockpit, in Drury Lane, in Mr. Rhodes's company, who played there by a license in the year 1659, when Betterton was twenty-four years of age. He married Mrs. Mary Saunderson, an actress, who had been bred by Sir William D'Avenant, some time in the year 1663, as appears by the *Dramatis Personæ* of *The Slighted Maid*, printed in that year. From a paper now before me which Sir Henry Herbert has entitled a *Breviat* of matters to be proved on the trial of an action brought by him against Mr. Betterton in 1662, I find that he continued to act at the Cockpit till November 1660, when he and several other performers entered into articles with Sir William D'Avenant; in consequence of which they began in that month to play at the theatre in Salisbury Court, from whence after some time, I believe, they returned to the Cockpit, and afterwards removed to a new theatre in Portugal-Row near Lincoln's Inn Fields. These Articles were as follows.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT tripartite, indented, made, and agreed upon this fifth day of November in the twelfth yeere of the reigne of our sovereigne Lord king Charles the Second, Annoque Domini 1660, between Sir Wm. Davenant of London, Kt. of the first part, and Thomas Betterton, Thomas Sheppey, Robert Noakes, James Noakes, Thomas Lovell, John Moseley, Cave Underhill, Robert Turner, and Thomas Lilleston, of the second part; and Henry Harris of the city of London, painter, of the third part, as followeth.

Imprimis,

5 This celebrated actor continued on the stage fifty years, and died intestate in April 1710. No person appears to have administered to him. Such was his extreme modesty, that not long before his death "he confessed that he was yet learning to be an actor." His wife survived him two years. By her last will, which was made, March 10, 1711-12, and proved in the following month, she bequeathed to Mrs. Mary Head, her sister, and to two other persons, 20l. a-piece, "to be paid out of the arrears of the pension which her Majesty had been graciously pleased to grant her;" to Mrs. Anne Betterton, Mr. Wilks, Mr. Dent, Mr. Dogget, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, twenty shillings each for rings, and to her residuary legatee Mrs. Frances Williamson, the wife of — Williamson, "her dearly beloved husband's picture."

6 Mrs. Mary Head must have been Mr. Betterton's sister; for Mrs. Betterton's own name was Mary.

Imprimis, the said Sir William Davenant doth for himself his executors, administrators and assigns, covenant, promise, grant, and agree, to and with the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Sheppey, Robert Noakes, James Noakes, Thomas Lovell, John Moseley, Cave Underhill, Robert Turner, and Thomas Lilleston, that he the said Sir William Davenant by vertue of the authority to him derived for that purpose does hereby constitute, ordeine and erect them the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Sheppey, Robert Noakes, James Noakes, Thomas Lovell, John Moseley, Cave Underhill, Robert Turner, and Thomas Lilleston, and their associates, to bee a company, publicquely to act all manner of tragedies, comedies, and playes whatsoever, in any theatre or playhouse erected in London or Westminster or the suburbs thereof, and to take the usual rates for the same, to the uses hereafter exprest, untill the said Sir William Davenant shall provide a newe theatre with SCENES.

Item, It is agreed by and between all the said parties to these presents, that the said company (untill the said theatre bee provided by the said Sir William Davenant) be authorized by him to act tragedies, comedies, and playes in the playhouse called Salisbury Court playhouse, or any other house, upon the conditions only hereafter following, vizt.

That the generall receipte of money of the said play-house, shall (after the house-rent, hirelings *, and all other accustomed and necessary expences in that kind be defrayed) bee divided into fowerteene proportions or shares, whereof the said Sir William Davenant shall have foure full proportions or shares to his own use, and the rest to the use of the said company.

That durence the time of playing in the said playhouse, (untill the aforesaid theatre bee provided by the said Sir Wm. Davenant,) the said Sir Wm. Davenant shall depute the said Thomas Batterton, James Noakes, and Thomas Sheppey, or any one of them particularly, for him and on his behalse, to receive his proportion of those shares and to survey the accompte conducing thereunto, and to pay the said proportions every night to him the said Sir Wm. Davenant or his assigns, which they doe hereby covenant to pay accordingly.

That the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Sheppey, and the rest of the said company shall admit such a consort of musiciens into the said playhouse for their necessary use, as the

* i. e. men hired occasionally by the night: in modern language, *supernumeraries*.

said Sir William shall nominate and provide, duringe their playinge in the said playhouse, not exceedinge the rate of 30s. the day, to bee defrayed out of the generall expences of the house before the said fowerteene shares bee devided.

“ That the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Sheppey, and the rest of the said companie bee authorized to play in the playhouse in Salisbury Court or elsewhere, as aforesaid, shall at one weeks warninge given by the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his heires or assignes, dissolve and conclude their playeing at the house and place aforesaid, or at any other house where they shall play, and shall remove and joyne with the said Henry Harris, and with other men and women provided or to bee provided by the said Sir Wm. Davenant, to performe such tragedies, comedies, playes, and representations in that theatre to be provided by him the said Sir William as aforesaid.

Item, It is agreed by and betweene all the said parties to these presents in manner and form followinge, vizt. That when the said companie, together with the said Henry Harris, are joyned with the men and women to be provided by the said Sir William Davenant to act and performe in the said theatre to bee provided by the said Sir Wm. Davenant, that the generall receipte of the said theatre (the generall expence first beinge deducted) shall bee devided into fiftene shares or proportions, whereof two shares or proportions shall bee paid to the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators, or assignes, towards the house-rent, buildinge, scaffoldinge, and makinge of frames for SCENES, and one other share or proportion shall likewise bee paid to the said Sir William, his executors, administrators and assignes, for provision of habitts, properties, and SCENES, for a supplement of the said theatre.

That the other twelve shares (after all expences of men hirelings and other custumary expences deducted) shall bee devided into seaven and five shares or proportions, whereof the said Sir Wm. D'Avenant, his executors, administrators, or assigns, shall have seaven shares or proportions, to mainteine all the women that are to performe or represent womens parts in the aforesaid tragedies, comedies, playes, or representations; and in consideration of erectinge and establishinge them to bee a companie, and his the said Sir Wms. paines and expences to that purpose for many yeeres. And the other five of the said shares or proportions is to bee devided amongst the rest of the persons [parties] to theis presents, whereof the said Henry Harris is to have an equal share with the greatest proportion in the said five shares or proportions.

That the generall receipte of the said theatre (from and after such time as the said Companie have performed their
playinge

playeing in Salisbury Court, or in any other playhouse, according to and noe longer than the tyme allowed by him (the said William as aforesaid) shall bee by ballatine, or tickets sealed for all doores and boxes.

That Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators or assignes, shall at the generall charge of the whole receipte provide three persons to receive money for the said tickets, in a roome adjoyning to the said theatre; and that the actors in the said theatre, nowe parties to these presents, who are concerned in the said five shares or proportions, shall dayly or weekly appoint two or three of themselves, or the men hirings deputed by them, to sit with the aforesaid three persons appointed by the said Sir William, that they may survey or give an accompt of the money received for the said tickets: That the said seaven shares shall bee paid nightly by the said three persons by the said Sir Wm. deputed, or by anie of them, to him the said Sir Wm. his executors, administrators, or assignes.

That the said Sir William Davenant shall appoint half the number of the door-keepers necessary for the receipt of the said tickets for doores and boxes, the wardrobe-keeper, barber, and all other necessary persons as hee the said Sir Wm. shall think fitt, and their sallary to bee defrayed at the publique charge.

That when any sharer amongst the actors of the aforesaid shares, and parties to these presents, shall dye, that then the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators or assignes, shall have the denomination and appointment of the successor and successors. And likewise that the wages of the men hirings shall be appointed and established by the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators, or assignes.

That the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators, or assignes, shall not bee obliged out of the shares or proportions allowed to him for the supplyeing of cloathes, habitts, and scenes, to provide cyther hatts, feathers, gloves, ribbons, sworde-belts, bands, stockings, or shoes, for any of the men actors aforesaid, unless it be a propertie.

That a private boxe bee provided and established for the use of Thomas Killigrew, Esq. one of the groomes of his Majties bedchamber, sufficient to containe fixe persons, into which the said Mr. Killigrew, and such as he shall appoint, shall have liberty to enter without any sallary or pay for their entrance into such a place of the said theatre as the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his heires, executors, administrators, or assignes, shall appoint.

That the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Sheppey, Robert Noakes, James Noakes, Thomas Lovell, John Moseley, Cave

Cave Underhill, Robert Turner, and Thomas Lilleston, doe hereby for themselves covenant, promise, grant and agree, to and with the said Sir W. D. his executors, administrators, and assignes, by these presents, that they and every of them shall become bound to the said Sir Wm. Davenant, in a bond of 5000*l.* conditioned for the performance of these presents. And that every successor to any part of the said five shares or proportions shall enter into the like bonds before hee or they shall bee admitted to share anie part or proportion of the said shares or proportions.

And the said Henry Harris doth hereby for himself his executors, administrators, and assignes, covenant, promise, grant and agree, to and with the said Sir Wm. Davenant, his executors, administrators, and assignes, by these presents, that hee the said Henry Harris shall within one weeke after the notice given by Sir Wm. Davenant for the concluding of the playeing at Salisbury Court or any other house else abovesaid, become bound to the said Sir Wm. Davenant in a bond of 5000*l.* conditioned for the performance of these [presents]. And that every successor to any of the said five shares shall enter into the like bond, before hee or they shall bee admitted to have any part or proportion in the said five shares.

Item, It is mutually agreed by and betweene all the parties to these presents, that the said Sir William Davenant alone shall bee Master and Superior, and shall from time to time have the sole government of the said Thomas Batterton, Thomas Shieppey, Robert Noakes, James Noakes, Thomas Lovell, John Moseley, Cave Underhill, Robert Turner and Thomas Lilleston, and also of the said Henry Harris, and their associates, in relation to the playes [play-house] by these presents agreed to bee erected.

On the 15th of Nov. 1660, Sir William D'Avenant's company began to act under these articles at the theatre in Salisbury Court, at which house or at the Cockpit they continued to play till March or April 1662. In October 1660, Sir Henry Herbert had brought an action on the case against Mr. Mohun and several others of Killigrew's company, which was tried in December 1661, for representing plays without being licensed by him, and obtained a verdict against them, as appears from a paper which I shall insert in its proper place. Encouraged by his success in that suit, soon after D'Avenant's company opened their new theatre in Portugal Row, he brought a similar action (May 6, 1662,) against Mr. Bet-

terton,

terton, of which I know not the event. In the declaration, now before me, it is stated that D'Avenant's company, between the 15th of November 1660, and the 6th of May 1662, produced ten new plays and 100 revived plays; but the latter number being the usual style of declarations at law, may have been inserted without a strict regard to the fact.

Sir Henry Herbert likewise brought two actions on the same ground against Sir William Davenant, in one of which he failed, and in the other was successful. To put an end to the contest, Sir William in June 1662, besought the king to interfere.

"To the Kings most Sacred Majesty.

"The humble petition of Sir William Davenant, Knight,

"Sheweth,

"That your petitioner has bin molested by Sir Henry Herbert with several prosecutions at law.

"That those prosecutions have not proceeded by your petitioners default of not paying the said Henry Herbert his pretended fees, (he never having sent for any to your petitioner,) but because your petitioner hath publicquely presented plaies; notwithstanding he is authoriz'd thereunto by pattent from your Majesties most royall Father, and by severall warrants under your Majesties royal hand and signet.

"That your petitioner (to prevent being out-law'd) has bin inforc'd to answer him in two tryals at law, in one of which, at Westminster, your petitioner hath had a verdict against him, where it was declar'd that he hath no jurisdiction over any plaiers, nor any right to demand fees of them. In the other, (by a London jury) the Master of Revels was allow'd the correction of plaies, and fees for soe doing; but not to give plaiers any licence or authoritie to play, it being prov'd that no plaiers were ever authoriz'd in London or Westminster, to play

* From a paper which Sir Henry Herbert has entitled "*A Breviat*" of matters to be proved on this trial, it appears that he was possessed of the Office-books of his predecessors, Mr. Tilney and Sir George Buc; for, among other points of which proof was intended to be produced, he states, that "Several plays were allowed by Mr. Tilney in 1598, which is 62 years since:

"As	{ Sir William Longsword The Fair Maid of London Richard Cordelion.	} Allowed to be acted in 1598. See the bookes.
	{ King and no King allowed to be acted in 1611, and the same to be printed. Hogg both lost its pearl, and hundreds n. cr.	{ Allowed by Sir George Buck."

play by the commission of y^e Master of Revels, but by authoritie immediately from the crowne. Neither was the proportion of fees then determin'd, or made certaine; because severall witnesses affirm'd that variety of payments had bin made; sometimes of a noble, sometimes of twenty, and afterwards of forty shillings, for correcting a new play; and that it was the custome to pay nothing for supervising reviv'd plaies.

"That without any authoritie given him by that last verdict, he sent the day after the tryall a prohibition under his hand and seale (directed to the plaiers in Little Lincolnes Inn fields) to forbid them to act plaies any more.

"Therefore your petitioner humbly praies that your Majesty will graciously please (two verdicts having pass'd at common law contradicting each other) to referre the case to the examination of such honourable persons as may satisfy your Majesty of the just authoritie of the Master of Revels, that so his fees (if any be due to him) may be made certaine, to prevent extortion; and time prescribed how long he shall keep plaies in his hands, in pretence of correcting them; and whether he can demand fees for reviv'd plaies; and lastly, how long plaies may be lay'd asyde, ere he shall judge them to be reviv'd.

"And your petitioner (as in duty bound) shall ever pray," &c.

"At the Court at Hampton Court, the 30th of June, 1662.

"His Majesty, being graciously inclin'd to have a just and friendly agreement made betweene the petitioner and the said Sir Henry Harbert, is pleas'd to referre this petition to the right honorable the Lord high Chancellor of England, and the Lord Chamberlaine, who are to call before them, as well the petitioner, as the said Sir Henry Harbert, and upon hearing and examining their differences, are to make a faire and amicable accommodation between them, if it may be, or otherwise to certify his Majesty the true state of this businesse, together with their Lord.^{ps} opinions.

EDWARD NICHOLAS.

"Wee appoint Wednesday morning next before ten of the clock to heare this businesse, of which Sir Henry Harbert and the other parties concern'd are to have notice,

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notice, my Lord Chamberlaine having agreed to that hour.

" July 7, 1662. CLARENDONE."

On the reference to the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chamberlain, Sir Henry Herbert presented the following statement of his claims.

" To the R.^t Honn.^{ble} Edward Earle of Clarendon, Lord High Chancellor of England, and Edward Earle of Manchester, Lord Chamberlain of his Ma.^{ties} Household.

" In obedience to your lordships comandes signified unto mee on the ninth of this instant July, do make a remembrance of the fees, profittes, and incidents, belonging to y^e office of the Revels. They are as followeth:

" For a new play, to bee brought with the booke	£. s. d.
" For an old play, to be brought with the booke	002 00 00
" For Christmasse fee	001 00 00
" For Lent fee	003 00 00
" The profittes of a summers day play at the Black fryers, valued at	003 00 00
" The profittes of a winters day*, at Black-fryers	050 00 00
" Besides severall occasionall gratuities from the late K. ^s company at B. fryers.	
" For a share from each company of four companies of players (besides the late Kinges Company) valued at a 100l. a yeare, one yeare with another, besides the usuall fees, by the yeare	400 00 00
" That the Kinges Company of players couenanted the 11th of August, 60, to pay Sir Henry Herbert per week, from that tyme, above the usuall fees	004 00 00
" That Mr. William Beeston couenanted to pay weekly to Sir Henry Herbert the the summe of	004 00 00
" That Mr. Rhodes promised the like per weeke	004 00 00

" That

* It is extraordinary that the Master of the Revels should have ventured to state fifty pounds as the produce of each of the benefits given him by the King's company. We have seen (p. 131,) that at an average they did not produce nine pounds each, and after a trial of some years he compounded with that company for the certain sum of ten pounds for his winter's day, and the like sum for his summer benefit.

“ That the 12l. per weeke from the three forenamed compaynes hath been totally deteyned from Sir Henry Herbert since the said 11th Aug. 60, by illegal and unjust means; and all usuall fees, and obedience due to the office of the Revells.

“ That Mr. Thomas Killegrew drawes 19l. 6s. per week from the Kinges Company, as credibly informed.

“ That Sir William Dauenant drawes 10 shares of 15 shares, which is valued at 200l. per week, cleer profit, one week with another, as credibly informed.

“ Allowance for charges of suites at law, for that Sir Henry Herbert is unjustly putt out of possession and profittes, and could not obtaine an appearance gratis.

“ Allowance for damages susteyned in credit and profittes for about two yeares since his Ma.^{ties} happy Restauration.

“ Allowance for their New Theatre to bee used as a play-house.

“ Allowance for new and old playes acted by Sir William Dauenantes pretended company of players at Salilbery Court, the Cockpitt, and now at Portugall-Rowe, from the 5th Novemb. 60. the tyme of their first conjunction with Sir William Dauenant.

“ Allowance for the fees at Christmasse and at Lent from the said tyme.

“ A boxe for the Master of the Reuells and his company, gratis;—as accustomed.

“ A submission to the authority of the Revells for the future, and that noe playes, new or old, bee acted, till they are allowed by the Master of the Reuells.

“ That rehearfall of plays to be acted at court, be made, as hath been accustomed, before the Master of the Reuells, or allowance for them.

“ Wherefore it is humbly pray’d, that delay being the said Dauenants best plea, w^{ch} he hath exercised by illegall actinges for almost two yeares, he may noe longer keep Sir Henry Herbert out of possession of his rightes; but that your Lordshippes would speedily assert the rights due to the Master of the Reuells, and ascertaine his fees and damages, and order obedience and payment accordingly. And in case of disobedience by the said Dauenant and his pretended company of players,

players, that Sir Henry Herbert may bee at liberty to pursue his course at law, in confidence that he shall have the benefitt of his Ma.^{ty}s justice, as of your lordshippes fauour and promises in satisfaction, or liberty to proceed at law. And it may bee of ill consequence that Sir Henry Herbert, dating for 45 yeares meniall service to the Royall Family, and hauing purchased Sir John Ashleys interest in the said office, and obtained of the late Kings bounty a grante under the great seale of England for two liues, should haue noe other compensation for his many yeares faithfull services, and constant adherence to his Ma.^{ty}s interest, accompanied with his great sufferings and losses, then to bee outed of his iust possession, rightes and profittes, by Sir William Dauenant, a person who exercised the office of Master of the Reuells to Oliuer the Tyrant, and wrote the *First and Second Parte of Peru*, acted at the Cockpitt, in Oliuers tyme, and soly in his fauour; wherein hee sett of the justice of Oliuers actinges, by comparison with the Spaniards, and endeauoured thereby to make Oliuers cruelties appeare mercyes, in respect of the Spanish cruelties; but the mercyes of the wicked are cruell.

"That the said Dauenant published a poem in vindication and justification of Oliuers actions and government, and an Epithalamium in praise of Oliuers daughter M^s. Rich; — as credibly informed *.

"The matters of difference betweene Mr. Thomas Killigrew and Sir Henry Herbert are upon accomodation.

"My Lordes,
"Your Lordshippes very humble Servant,

"July 11th 62.

Cary-house.

HENRY HERBERT."

Another paper now before me will explain what is meant by Sir Henry Herbert's concluding words.

"ARTICLES of agreement, indented, made and agreed upon, this fourthe day of June, in the 14 yeare of the reigne of our soueraigne lord Kinge Charles the Second, and in the yeare of our Lord, 1662, betweene Sir Henry Herbert of Ribsford in the county of Worcester, knight, of the one part, and Thomas Killigrew of Couent Garden, Esq. on the other parte, as followethe:

"*Imprimis*, It is agreed, that a firme amity be concluded for life betweene the said Sir Henry Herbert and the said Thomas Killigrew.

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"Item,

* This poem Sir William D'Avenant suppressed, for it does not appear in his works.

Item, The said Thomas Killegrew doth for himselfe couenant, promise, grant, and agree, to paye or cause to be pay'd unto Sir Henry Herbert, or to his assignes, on or before the fourthe day of August next, all monies due to the said Sir Henry Herbert from the Kinge and Queens company of players, called Mychaell Mohun, William Wintershall, Robert Shaterell, William Cartwright, Nicholas Burt, Walter Clunn, Charles Hart, and the rest of that company, for the new plaies at fortie shillings a play, and for the old reuined plaies at twentie shillings a play, they the said players haue acted since the eleuenthe of August, in the yeare of our Lord, 1660.

Item, The said Thomas Killegrew, Esq. doth for himselfe couenant, promise, grante, and agree, to paye or cause to be pay'd unto the said Sir Henry Herbert, or to his assignes, on or before the fourthe day of August next, such monies as are due to him for damages and losses obteyned at law ag.^t Mychaell Mohun, William Wintershall, Robert Shaterell, William Cartwright, Nicholas Burt, Walter Clunn, and Charles Hart, upon an action of the case brought by the said Sir Henry Herbert in the courte of Comon Pleas ag.^t y^e said Mychaell Mohun, William Wintershall, Robert Shaterell, William Cartwright, Nicholas Burt, Walter Clunn, and Charles Hart, wherupon a verdict hath been obteyned as aforesaid ag.^t them. And likewise doe promise and agree that the costes and charges of suite upon another action of the case brought by the said Sir Henry Herbert ag.^t the said Mychaell Mohun & y^e rest of y^e players aboue named, shall be also payd to the said Sir Henry Herbert or to his assignes, on or before the said fourthe day of August next.

Item, The said Thomas Killegrew doth for himselfe couenant, promise, grante and agree, that the said Michael Mohun and the rest of the Kinge and Queenes company of players shall, on or before the said fourthe day of August next, paye or cause to be pay'd unto the said Sir Henry Herbert, or to his assignes, the sum of fiftie pounds, as a present from them, for his damages susteyned from them and by their means.

Item, That the said Thomas Killegrew, Esq. doth couenant, promise, grante, and agree, to be aydinge and assistinge unto the said Sir Henry Herbert in the due execution of the Office of the Reuelle, and neither directly nor indirectly to ayde or assiste Sir William Dauenant, Knight, or any of his pretended company of players, or any other company of players to be rays'd by him, or any other company of players whatsoever, in the due execution of the said office

office as aforefaide, for as y^e sayd for to bee required of y^e said Thomas Killegrew extend not to y^e silencing or oppression of y^e said King and Queenes company.

“ And the said Sir Henry Herbert doth for himselfe covenant, promise, grante, and agree, not to molest y^e said Thomas Killegrew, Esq. or his heirs, in any suite at lawe or otherwise, to the prejudice of the grante made unto him by his Ma.^{tie}, or to disturbe the receiuinge of y^e profits arysing by contract from the Kinge and Queens company of players to him, but to ayde and assiste the said Thomas Killegrew, in the due execution of the legall powers granted unto him by his Ma.^{tie} for the orderinge of the said company of players, and in the levyinge and receiuinge of y^e monies due to him the said Thomas Killegrew, or which shall be due to him from y^e saide company of players by any contract made or to be made between them or amongst the same; and neither directly nor indirectly to hinder the payment of y^e said monies to be made weekly or otherwise by y^e said company of players to y^e said Thomas Killegrew, Esq. or to his assignes, but to be ayding and assistinge to the said Thomas Killegrew, Esq. and his assignes therein, if there be cause for it, and that the said Thomas Killegrew desire it of y^e said Sir Henry Herbert.

“ And the said Sir Henry Herbert doth for himselfe covenant, promise, grante, and agree, upon the performance of the matters which are herein containyd, and to be performed by the said Thomas Killegrew, accordinge to the daies of payment, and other things limited and expressed in these articles, to deliuer into the hands of y^e said Thomas Killegrew the deede of covenants, sealed and deliuered by the said Mychaell Mohun and y^e others herein named, bearing date the 11th August, 1660; to be cancelled by the said Thomas Killegrew, or kept, as he shall thinke fitt, or to make what further advantage of the same in my name or right as he shall be aduised *.”

The actors who had performed at the Red Bull, acted under the direction of Mr. Killigrew during the years 1660, 1661, 1662, and part of the year 1663, in Gibbon's tennis-court in Vere-street, near Clare-market; during which time a new theatre was built for them in Drury Lane, to which they removed in April 1663. The following list of their stock-plays, in which it is observable there are but three

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of

* On the back of this paper Sir Henry Herbert has written—“ Copy of the Articles sealed and delivered the 5th of June, 62, between Sir H. H. and Thomas Killegrew. Bonds of 500*l*. for the performance of covenants.”

Shakspeare, was found among the papers of Sir Henry Herbert, and was probably furnished by them soon after the Restoration.

Names of the plays acted by the Red Bull actors.

<i>The Humorous Lieutenant.</i>	<i>Elder Brother.</i>
<i>Beggars Bush.</i>	<i>The Silent Woman.</i>
<i>Tamer Tamed.</i>	<i>The Wedding.</i>
<i>The Traylor.</i>	<i>Henry the Fourth.</i>
<i>Loves Cruelty.</i>	<i>Merry Wives of Windsor.</i>
<i>Wit without money.</i>	<i>King and no King.</i>
<i>Maydes Tragedy.</i>	<i>Othello.</i>
<i>Philaster.</i>	<i>Dumboys.</i>
<i>Rollo Duke of Normandy.</i>	<i>The Unfortunate Lovers.</i>
<i>Claricilla.</i>	<i>The Widow.</i>

Downes the prompter has given a list of what he calls the principal old stock plays acted by the king's servants, (which title the performers under Mr. Killigrow acquired,) between the time of the Restoration and the junction of the two companies in 1682; from which it appears that the only plays of Shakspeare performed by them in that period, were *K. Henry IV. P. I. The Merry Wives of Windsor, Othello, and Julius Caesar.* Mr. Hart represented *Othello, Brutus, and Hotspur; Major Mohun Iago, and Cassius;* and Mr. Cartwright, *Falstaff.* Such was the lamentable taste of those times that the plays of Fletcher, Johnson and Shirley were much oftner exhibited than those of our author. Of this the following list furnishes a melancholy proof. It appears to have been made by Sir Henry Herbert in order to enable him to ascertain the fees due to him, whenever he should establish his claims, which however he never accomplished. Between the play entitled *Argalus and Parthenia, and The Loyal Subject,* he has drawn a line; from which, and from other circumstances, I imagine that the plays which I have printed in Italicks were exhibited by the Red Bull actors, who afterwards became the king's servants.

1660. Monday the 5 Nov.	<i>Wit without money.</i>
Tuesday the 6 Nov.	<i>The Traylor.</i>
Wednesday the 7 Nov.	<i>The Beggars Bush.</i>
Thursday the 8 Nov.	<i>Henry the Fourth.</i>
	[First play acted at the new theatre.]
Friday the 9 Nov.	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor.</i>
Saturday the 10 Nov.	<i>The Silent Woman.</i>
Sunday the 11 Nov.	<i>Love lies a bleeding.</i>

Thursday

Thursday the 15 Nov.	<i>Loves Cruelty.</i>
Friday the 16 Nov.	<i>The Widow.</i>
Saturday the 17 Nov.	<i>The Mayds Tragedy.</i>
Monday the 19 Nov.	<i>The Unfortunate Lovers.</i>
Tuesday the 20 Nov.	<i>The Beggars Bush.</i>
Wednesday the 21 Nov.	<i>The Scornfull Lady.</i>
Thursday the 22 Nov.	<i>The Traytor.</i>
Friday the 23 Nov.	<i>The Elder Brother.</i>
Saturday the 24 Nov.	<i>The Chances.</i>
Monday the 26 Nov.	<i>The Opportunity.</i>
Thursday the 29 Nov.	<i>The Humorous Lieutenant.</i>
Saturday the 1 Dec.	<i>Clarecilla.</i>
Monday the 3 Dec.	<i>A Kinge and no Kinge.</i>
Thursday the 6 Dec.	<i>Rollo, Duke of Normandy.</i>
Saturday the 8 Dec.	<i>The Moore of Venise.</i>
Monday the 9 Jan.	<i>The Weddinge.</i>
Saturday the 19 Jan.	<i>The Lost Lady.</i>
Thursday the 31 Jan.	<i>Argalus and Parthenia.</i>

Feb.

Loyal Subject.

Mad Lover.

The Wild-goose Chase.

1661. March }

April }

May }

All's Loste by Luste.

The Mayd in the Mill.

A Wife for a Monthe.

The Bondman.

Decemb. 10

A Dancing Master.

Decemb. 11

Vittoria Corombona.

Decemb. 13

The Country Captaine.

Decemb. 16

The Alchymist.

Decemb. 17

Bartholmew Faire.

Decemb. 20

The Spanish Curate.

Decemb. 23

The Tamer Tamed.

Decemb. 28

Aglaure.

Decemb. 30

Buffy D'ambois.

Janu. 6

Mery Devil of Edmonton.

Jan. 10

The Virgin Martyr.

Jan. 11

Philaster.

Jan. 21

Jovial Crew.

Jan. 28

Rule a wife and have a wife.

Feb. 15

Kinge and no Kinge.

Feb. 25

The Mayds Tragedy.

Feb. 27

Aglaure; the tragical way.

March 1

Humorous Lieutenant.

March 3

Selindra—a new play.

March

March 11	The French Dabbinge Ma.
March 15	The Little Theatrical [ster.
1662. April 4	Nocturnal Lasse.
April 19	Fathoms own son.
April 25	The Surprisel—a new play.
May 5	Kt. of the Burning pestle.
May 12	Benoralt.
May 17	Love in a maze.
1661. Octob. 26	Love's Mistress.
	Discontented Collonell.
	Love at first sight.
1662. June 1	Cornelia, a new play.— Sir
	W. Bartleya.
June 6	Renegado.
July 6	The Brothers.
	The Antipodes.
July 23	The Cardinall.

From another list, which undoubtedly was made by Sir Henry Herbert for the purpose I have mentioned, I learn that *Macbeth* was revived in 1663 or 1664; I suppose as altered by D'Avenant.

" Nov. 3. 1663. <i>Flora's Figaries</i>	£. 2. . .
" A pastorall called <i>The Exposure</i>	2. . .
" 8 more	16. . .
" A new play	1. . .
" <i>Henry the 5th</i>	2. . .
" Revived play. <i>Taming the Shrew</i>	1. . .
" <i>The Generall</i>	2. . .
" <i>Parsons Weddinge</i>	2. . .
" Revived play. <i>Macbeth</i>	1. . .
" <i>K. Henry 8. Revived play</i>	1. . .
" <i>House to be let</i>	2. . .
" More for plays, whereof <i>Elvira</i> the last	9. . .
" For plays	£. 41."

Sir William D'Avenant's Company, after having played for some time at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, and at Salisbury Court, removed in March or April 1662, to a new theatre in Portugal Row near Lincoln's Inn Fields. Mr. Betterton, his principal actor, we are told by Downes, was admired in the part of Pericles, which he frequently performed before the opening of the new theatre; and while this company continued

used to act in Portugal Row, they represented the following plays of Shakspeare, and it should seem those only: *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, altered by D'Avenant; *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *King Henry the Eighth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Twelfth Night*. In *Hamlet*, the Prince of Denmark was represented by Mr. Betterton; the Ghost by Mr. Richards; Horatio by Mr. Harris; the Queen by Mrs. Davenport; and Ophelia by Mrs. Saunderson. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo was represented by Mr. Harris, Mercutio by Mr. Betterton, and Juliet by Mrs. Saunderson. Mr. Betterton in *Twelfth Night* performed Sir Toby Belch, and in *Henry the Eighth*, the King. He was without doubt also the performer of *King Lear*. Mrs. Saunderson represented Catharine in *King Henry the Eighth*, and it may be presumed, Cordelia, and Miranda. She also performed Lady Macbeth, and Mr. Betterton Macbeth.

The theatre which had been erected in Portugal Row, being found too small, Sir William D'Avenant laid the foundation of a new playhouse in Dorset Garden, near Dorset Stairs, which however he did not live to see completed; for he died in May 1668, and it was not opened till 1671. There being strong reason to believe that he was our poet's son, I have been induced by that circumstance to mix him with some degree of minuteness into his history. I have mentioned in a preceding page that the account given of him by Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, was taken from Mr. Aubrey's Manuscript. Since that sheet was printed, Mr. Warton has obligingly furnished me with an exact transcript of the article relative to D'Avenant, which, as it contains some particulars not noticed by Wood, I shall here subjoin:

“MS. Aubrey. MUS. ASHMOL. LIVES.

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT, KNIGHT,
POET-LAUREAT^o,

was borne about the end of February in ——— street in the city of Oxford, at the Crowne Taverne; baptized 3 of March A. D. 1605-6. His father was John Davenant, a vintner there, a very grave and discreet citizen: his mother was a very beautifull woman, and of a very good witt, and of conversation extremely agreeable. They had 3 sons, viz. Robert, William, and Nicholas; (Robert was a fellow of St. John's Coll. in Oxon. then preferd to the vicarage of West-kington by Bp. Davenant, whose chaplain he was; Nicholas

* Mr. Warton informs me, that “it appears by Aubrey's letters that this life of Davenant was sent to Wood, and drawn up at his request.”

was an attorney :) and 2 handsome daughters; one m. to Gabriel Bradly, B. D. of C. C. C. beneficed in the vale of White Horse; another to Dr. Sherburne, minister of *Pembodge* [—bridge] in Heref. and canon of that church. Mr. W^m Shakespeare was wont to goe into Warwickshire once a yeare, and did comonly in his journey lie at this house in Oxon. where he was exceedingly respected. Now Sir William would sometimes, when he was pleasant over a glasse of wine with his intimate friends (s. g. Sam Butler, author of *Hudibras etc. etc.*) say, that it seem'd to him, that he writt with the very spirit that Shakespeare [wrote with], and was contented enough to bee thought his son: he would tell them the story as above. He went to schoole at Oxon. to Mr. Silvester; Charles Wheare, F. [*filius*] Degorii W., was his schoolfellow: but I feare, he was drawne from schoole, before he was ripe enoughe. He was preferred to the first Dutcheff of Richmond, to wayte on her as a page. I remember, he told me, she sent him to a famous apothecary for some unicorn's horne, which he was resolved to try with a spyder, which he empaled in it, but without the expected success: the spyder would goe over and through and thorough, unconcerned. He was next a servant (as I remember, a page also) to Sir Fulke Grevill Ld. Brookes, with whom he lived to his death; which was, that a servant of his that had long wayted on him, and his lor—[lordship] had often told him, that he would doe something for him, but did not, but still put him off with delay; as he was trussing up his lord's pointes, coming from stoole, [for then their breeches were fastened to the doublets with pointes; then came in hookes and cies, which not to have fastened was in my boyhood a great crime,] stabbed him. This was at the same time that the duke of Buckingham was stabbed by Felton; and the great noise and report of the duke's Sir W. told me, quite drown'd this of his lord's, that was scarce taken notice of. This Sir Fulke G. was a good wit, and had been a good poet in his youth: he wrote a poeme in folio, which he printed not till he was old, and then, as Sir W. said, with too much judgement and refining spoiled it, which was at first a delicate thing. He [Dav.] writt a play, or plays, and verses, which he did with so much sweetnesse and grace, that by it he got the love and friendship of his two Mæcenaces, Mr. Endymion Porter, and Mr. Henry Jermyn, [since E. of St. Albans] to whom he has dedicated his poem called *Madagascar*. Sir John Suckling was his great and intimate friend. After the death of Ben Johnson, he was made in his place Poet Laureat. He gott a terrible c—p of a black handsome wench, that lay in Axe-Yard, Westm: whom he thought on, when he speaks of Dalga, [in *Gondibert*]

bert] which cost him his nose; with which unlucky mischance many wits were so cruelly bold, e. g. Sir John Menis, Sir John Denham, etc. etc. In 1641, when the troubles began, he was faine to fly into France, and at Canterbury he was seized on by the Mayor.

For Will had in his face the flaws

And markes received in country's cause.

They flew on him like Lyons passant,

And tore his nose, as much as was on't;

And call'd him superstitious groome,

And Popish dog; and cur of Rome.

— 'twas surely the first time,

That Will's religion was a crime.

In the Civill Warres in England, he was in the army of William Marquesse of Newcastle, [since Duke] where he was generall of the ordinance. I have heard his brother Robert say, for that service there was owing to him by King Charles the First 10000*l*. During that warre 'twas his hap to have two Aldermen of Yorke his prisoners, who were somethinge stubborne, and would not give the ranfome ordered by the councill of warre. Sir William used them civilly, and treated them in his tent, and sate them at the upper end of his table *à la mode de France*. And having done so a good while to his charge, told them (privately and friendly) that he was not able to keepe so chargeable guests, and bade them take an opportunity to escape; which they did; but having been gon a little way, they considered with themselves, that in gratitude they ought to goe back, and give Sir William their thanks, which they did; but it was like to have been to their great danger of being taken by the soldiers; but they happened to gett safe to Yorke.

The king's party being overcome, Sir W. Davenant, (who had the honour of knighthood from the D of Newcastle by commission) went into France, and resided in Paris, where the prince of Wales then was. He then began to write his romance in verse, called *Gondibert*; and had not writt above the first booke, but being very fond of it printed it, before a quarter finished, with an epistle of his to Mr. Th. Hobbes, and Mr. Hobbes' excellent epistle to him printed before it. The courtiers, with the Prince of Wales, could never be at quiet about this piece, which was the occasion of a very witty but satirical little booke of verses in 8vo. about 4 sheets, writt by G. D. of Bucks; Sir John Denham, etc. etc.

"That thou forsak'd thy sleepe, thy diet,

"And what is more than that, our quiet."

This last word, Mr. Hobbes told me, was the occasion of their writing.

Here lay'd an ingenioſe deſigne to carry a conſiderable number of artificers (chiefly weavers) from hence to Virginia; and by Mary the Q's. mother's meanes he got, favour from the K. of France to goe into the priſons, and pick and chufe: ſo when the poor damned wretches underſtood, what the deſigne was, they cryed *uno ore, tout tifferran*, we are all weavers. Well, 36, as I remember, he got, if not more, and ſhipped them; and as he was in his voyage towards Virginia, he and his *tifferran* were all taken by the ſhips then belonging to the parliament of England. The ſlaves, I ſuppoſe, they ſold, but Sir William was brought priſoner into England. Whether he was firſt a priſoner at Careſbroke Caſtle in the Iſle of Wight, or at the Towr of London, I have forgott; he was priſoner at both: his Gondibert was finiſhed at Careſbroke Caſtle. He expected no mercy from the parliament, and had no hopes of eſcaping with his life. It pleaſed God, that the two aldermen of Yorke aforeſaid, hearing that he was taken and brought to London to be tryed for his life, which they underſtood was in extreme danger, they were touched with ſo much generoſity and goodnes, as upon their own accounts and mere motion to try what they could to ſave Sir William's life, who had been ſo civill to them, and a means of ſaving theirs; to come to London; and acquainting the parliament with it, upon their petition, *etc.* Sir William's life was ſaved. 'Twas Harry Martyn, that ſaved Sir William's life in the houſe: when they were talking of ſacrificing one, then ſaid Hew. that "in ſacrifices they always offered pure and without blemiſh; now ye talk of making a ſacrifice of an old rotten rascal." Vid. H. Martyn's life, where by this rare jeſt, then forgot, the L.^d Falkland ſaved H. Martyn's life.

Being freed from imprifonment, becauſe plays (ſcil. trage. and comedies) were in theſe preſbyterian times ſcandalous, he contrives to ſet up an opera, *ſtylo recitativo*; wherein Sergeant Maynard and ſeveral citizens were engagers: it began in Rutland

* Theſe lines are inaccurately quoted by memory from *Certain Verſes written by ſome of the author's friends, to be re-printed with the ſecond edition of Gondibert*, 1653.

! Mr. Warton obſerves to me, that "Aubrey does not ſay here that Milton (with the two aldermen) was inſtrumental in ſaving D'Avenant's life. Dr. Johnson is puzzled on what authority to fix this anecdote. *ſſe of Milton*, p. 181, 8vo. edit. I believe that anecdote was firſt reſſed in print by Wood, *Atb. Oxon. II.* 412."

Rutland House in Charter-house-yard: next, scilicet anno— at the Cock-pit in Drury Lane, where were acted very well, *style recitativo*, *Sir Francis Drake*, and the *Siege of Rhodes*, 1st and 2nd part. It did affect the eie and eare extremely. This first brought SCENES in fashion in England: before, at plays was only an *hanging* *.

Anno Domini 1660, was the happy restoration of his Majesty Charles IInd; then was Sir William made —

— and the Tennis-Court in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields was turned into a playhouse for the Duke of York's players, where Sir William had lodgings, and where he dyed, Aprill — 166—. I was at his funeral: he had a coffin of walnut tree: Sir John Denham said, that it was the finest coffin that he ever saw. His body was carried in a hearse from the playhouse to Westminster Abbey, where at the great west dore he was received by the sing [ing] men and choristers, who sang the service of the church (*I am the Resurrection, etc. etc.*) to his grave, which is near to the monument of Dr. Isaac Barrow, which is in the South Crosse aisle, on which in a paving stone of marble is writt, in imitation of that on Ben. Johnson, O rare Sir William Davenant.

His first lady was Dr. —'s daughter, physician, by whom he had a very beautiful and ingenioſe son, that dyed above twenty years since. His second lady was daughter of —, by whom he had several children. I saw some very young ones at the funerall. His eldest is Sir Charles Davenant, the Doctor, who inherits his father's beauty and phancy. He practices at Doctor's Commons. He writt a play called *Circe*, which has taken very well. Sir William hath writt about 25 plays, the Romance called *Condibert*, and a little poem called *Madagascar*.

His private opinion was, that religion at last [*e. g.* a hundred years hence] would come to settlement; and that in a kind of ingenioſe Quakerisme *.

On

* Here we have another and a decisive confirmation of what has been stated in a former page on the subject of scenes. See p. 62, et. seq.

* The following plays, written by Sir William D'Avenant, were licensed by the Master of the Revels in the following order:

The Cruel Brother, Jan. 12, 1626-7.

The Colonel, July 22, 1629.

The Just Italian, Octob. 2, 1629.

The Wits, Jan. 19, 1633-4.

Love and Honour, Nov. 20, 1634.

News from Plymouth, Aug. 1, 1635.

Platonick Lovers, Nov. 16, 1635.

Britannia Triumphant, licensed for press, Jan. 8, 1637.

Unfortunatly

On the 9th of Novemb. 1671, D'Avenant's company removed to their new theatre in Dorset Gardens, which was opened,

Unfortunate Lovers, April 16, 1638.

Fair Favourite, Nov. 17, 1638.

The Spanish Lovers, Nov. 30, 1639.

This piece is probable the play which in his works is called *The Distresses*.

Love and Honour was originally called *The Courage of Love*. It was afterwards named by Sir Henry Herbert, at D'Avenant's request, *The Nonpareilles, or the Matchless Maids*.

In 1668 was published Sir William D'Avenant's *Voyage to the other world, with his adventures in the poet's Elyzium*, written by Richard Flecknoe, which I subjoin to the memoirs of that poet. Consisting of only a single sheet, the greater part of the impression has probably perished, for I have never met with a second copy of this piece.

" Sir William D'Avenant being dead, not a poet would afford him so much as an elegie; whether because he sought to make a monopoly of the art, or strove to become rich in spite of Minerva; it being with poets as with mushrooms, which grow onely on barren ground, enrich the soil once, and then degenerate: onely one, more humane than the rest, accompany'd him to his grave with this elogium.

Now Davenant's dead, the stage will mourn,
And all to barbarism turn;
Since he it was, this later age,
Who chiefly civiliz'd the stage.

Great was his wit, his fancy great,
As e're was any poet's yet;
And more advantage none e'er made
O' th' wit and fancy which he had.

Not onely Dedalus' arts he knew,
But even Prometheus's too;
And living machins made of men,
As well as dead ones, for the scene.

And if the stage or theatre be
A little world, 'twas chiefly he,
That, Atlas-like, supported it,
By force of industry and wit.

All this, and more, he did beside,
Which having perfected, he dy'd;
If he may properly be said
To die, whose fame will ne'er be dead.

" Another went further yet, and using the privilege of your antient poets, who with almost as much certainty as your divines, can tell all that passes in the other world, did thus relate his voyage thither, and all his adventures in the poets' elyzium.

" As every one at the instant of their deaths, have passports given them for some place or other, he had his for the poets' elyzium; which not without much difficulty he obtained from the officers of Parrifus: for when he alledg'd, he was an E'reick poet, they ask'd him why he did not

continue

was opened, not with one of Shakspeare's plays, but with Dryden's comedy called *Sir Martin Marall*°.

Between

continue it? when he said he was a dramattick too, they ask'd him, why he left it off, and onely studied to get money; like him who sold his horse to buy him provender: and finally, when he added, he was a poet laureate, they laugh'd, and said, bays was never more cheap than now; and that since Petrarch's time, none had ever been legitimately crown'd.

"Nor had he less difficulty with Charon, who hearing he was rich, thought to make booty of him, and ask'd an extraordinary price for his passage over; but coming to payment, he found he was so poor, as he was ready to turn him back agen, he having hardly so much as his *naulum*, or the price of every ordinary passenger.

"Being arriv'd, they were all much amaz'd to see him there, they having never heard of his being dead, neither by their weekly gazets, nor cryers of verses and pamphlets up and down; (as common a trade there, almost as it is here;) nor was he less amaz'd than they, to find never a poet there, antient nor modern, whom in some sort or other he had not disoblig'd by his discommendations; as Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Spencer, and especially Ben Johnson; contrary to Plinies rule, never to discommend any of the same profession with our selves: for either they are better or worse than you (says he); if better, if they be not worthy commendations, you much less; if worse, if they be worthy commendations, you much more: so every ways advantageous 'tis for us to commend others." Nay, even Shakspear, whom he thought to have found his greatest friend, was as much offended with him as any of the rest, for so spoiling and mangling of his plays. But he who most vexed and tormented him, was his old antagonist Jack Donne, who mock'd him with a hundred passages out of Gondibert; and after a world of other railing and spiteful language (at which the doctor was excellent) so exasperated the knight, at last, as they fell together by the ears: when but imagine

What tearing noses had been there,

Had they but noses for to tear.

"Mean time the comick poets made a ring about them, as boys do when they hiss dogs together by the ears; till at last they were separated by Pluto's officers, as diligent to keep the peace and part the fray, as your Italian Shirri, or Spanish Alguazilo; and so they drag'd them both away, the doctor to the stocks, for raising tumults and disturbances in hell, and the knight to the tribunal, where Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus were to sit in judgement on him, with Monus the common accuser of the court.

"Here being arriv'd, and silence commanded, they ask'd him his quality and profession: to whom he answer'd, he was a Poet-laureate, who for poetry in general had not his fellow alive, and had left none to equal him now he was dead: and for eloquence,

How

* John Donne, the eldest son of Donne the poet, was a Civilian. He is said to have met with a misfortune similar to that of D'Avenant.

° The building, scenes, &c. of that theatre cost 5000l. according to a statement given in a petition presented to Queen Anne about the year 1709, by Charles D'Avenant, Charles Killegrew, Christopher Rich, and others.

Between the year 1671 and 1682, when the King's and the Duke of York's servants united; (about which time

Charles

How never any hyperbolies

Were higher, or farther stretch'd than his;

Nor ever comparisons again

Made things compar'd more clear and plain.

Then for his plays or dramatick poetry.

How that of The Unfortunate Lovers

The depth of tragedy discovers;

In's Love and Honour you might see

The height of tragicomedy;

And for his Wits, the comick fire

In none yet ever flam'd up higher:

But coming to his Siege of Rhodes,

It outwent all the rest by odds;

And somewhat's in't, that does out-do

Both th' antients and the moderns too.

"To which Momus answered: that though they were never so good, it became not him to commend them as he did; that there were faults enough to be found in them; and that he had mar'd more good plays, than ever he had made; that all his wit lay in hyberbolies and comparisons, which, when accessory, were commendable enough, but when principal, deserved no great commendations; that his muse was none of the nine, but onely a mungril, or by-blow of Parnassus, and her beauty rather sophistical than natural; that he offer'd at learning and philosophy, but as pullen and stubble geese offer'd to fly, who after they had flutter'd up a while, at length came fluttering down as fast agen; that he was with his high-sounding words, but like empty hogheads, the higher they founded, the emptier still they were; and that, finally, he so perplex'd himself and readers with parenthesis on parenthesis, as, just as in a wilderness or labyrinth, all sense was lost in them.

"As for his life and manners, they would not examine those, since 'twas suppos'd they were licentious enough: onely he would say,

He was a good companion for

The rich, but ill one for the poor;

On whom he look'd so, you'd believe

He walk'd with a face negative;

Whilst he must be a lord at least,

For whom he'd smile or break a jest.

"And though this, and much more, was exaggerated against him by Momus, yet the judges were so favourable to him, because he had left the muses for Pluto, as they condemned him onely to live in Pluto's court, to make him and Proserpina merry with his facetious jests and stories; with whom in short time he became so gracious, by complying with their humours, and now and then dressing a dish or two of meat for them, as they joynd him in patent with Momus, and made him superintendent of all their sports and recreations: so as, onely changing place and persons, he is now in as good condition as he was before; and lives the same life there, as he did here.

" POSTSCRIPT.

This seems to allude to a fact then well known. D'Avenant was probably admitted to the private suppers of Charles the Second.

Charles Hart¹, the principal support of the former company, died,) *King Lear*, *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth*, and *The Tempest*;

"POSTSCRIPT
"To the Actors of the Theatre in Lincoln-Inn-Fields,

"I promised you a sight of what I had written of Sir William D'Avenant, and now behold it here: by it you will perceive how much they abused you, who told you it was such an abusive thing. If you like it not, take heed hereafter how you disoblige him, who can not only write for you, but against you too.

RICH. FLECKNOE."

¹ From the preface to Seate's *Fatal Love*, 1680, it should seem that he had then retired from the stage, perhaps in the preceding year; for in the prologue to the *Amorous Statesman*, 1679, are these lines, evidently alluding to him and Mr. Mohun:

"The time's neglect and maladies have thrown

"The two great pillars of our playhouse down."

Charles Hart, who, I believe, was our poet's great nephew, is said to have been Nell Gwin's first lover, and was the most celebrated tragedian of his time.

"What Mr. Hart delivers, (says Rymer) every one takes upon content; their eyes are prepossessed and charmed by his action before aught of the poet's can approach their ears; and to the most wretched of characters he gives a lustre and brilliant, which dazzles the sight, that the deformities in the poetry cannot be perceived." "Were I a poet, says another contemporary writer, nay a Fletcher, a Shakspeare, I would quit my own title to immortality, so that one actor might never die. This I may modestly say of him, (not is it my particular opinion, but the sense of all mankind,) that the best tragedies on the English stage have received their lustre from Mr. Hart's performance; that he has left such an impression behind him, that no less than the interval of an age can make them appear again with half their majesty from any second hand."

In a pamphlet entitled *The Life of the late famous comedian, J. Hayns*, 8vo. 1701, a characteristick trait of our poet's kinsman is preserved:

"About this time [1673] there happened a small pick between Mr. Hart and Jo, upon the account of his late negotiation in France; and there spending the company so much money to so little purpose, or, as I may more properly say, to no purpose at all.

"There happened to be one night a play acted called *Catiline's Conspiracy*, wherein there was wanting a great number of senators. Now Mr. Hart, being chief of the house, would oblige Jo to dress for one of these senators, although his salary, being 50s. per week, freed him from any such obligation.

"But Mr. Hart, as I said before, being sole governor of the playhouse, and at a small variance with Jo, commanded it, and the other must obey.

"Jo,

* Soon after the theatre in Drury Lane was burnt down, Jan. 1671-2, Hayns had been sent to Paris by Mr. Hart and Mr. Killigrew, to examine the machinery employed in the French Operas.

pest, were the only plays of our author that were exhibited at the theatre in Dorset Gardens, and the three latter were not represented in their original state, but as altered by D'Avenant² and Shadwell. Between 1682 and 1695, when Mr. Congreve, Mr. Betterton, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, obtained a licence to open a new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, *Othello*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*, are the only plays of Shakspeare which Downes the prompter mentions, as having been performed by the united companies: *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was transformed into an opera, and *The Taming of the Shrew* was exhibited as altered by Lacy. Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida*, however, the two parts of *King Henry IV.* *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *King Henry VIII.* *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet*, were without doubt sometimes represented in the same period: and Tate and Dufey furnished the scene with miserable alterations of

"Jo, being vexed at the sight Mr. Hart had put upon him, found out this method of being revenged on him. He gets a Scaramouch dress, a large full ruff, makes himself whiskers from ear to ear, puts on his head a long Merry Andrew's cap, a short pipe in his mouth, a little three-legged stool in his hand; and in this manner follows Mr. Hart on the stage, sets himself down behind him, and begins to smoke his pipe, laugh, and point at him. Which comical figure put all the house in an uproar, some laughing, some clapping, and some hollaing. Now Mr. Hart, as those who knew him can aver, was a man of that exactness and grandeur on the stage, that let what would happen, he'd never discompose himself, or mind any thing but what he then represented; and had a scene fallen behind him, he would not at that time look back, to have seen what was the matter; which Jo knowing, remained still smocking; the audience continued laughing, Mr. Hart acting, and wondering at this unusual occasion of their mirth; sometimes thinking it some disturbance in the house, again that it might be something amiss in his dress: at last turning himself toward the scenes, he discovered Jo in the afore-said posture; whereupon he immediately goes off the stage, swearing he would never set foot on it again, unless Jo was immediately turned out of doors, which was no sooner spoke, but put in practice."

² "The tragedy of *Macbeth*, altered by Sir William D'Avenant, being dress'd in all its finery, as new cloaths, new scenes, machines, as flyings for the witches, with all the singing and dancing in it, (the first composed by Mr. Lock, the other by Mr. Channel and Mr. Joseph Priest,) it being all excellently performed, being in the nature of an opera, is recompenced double the expence: it proves still a lasting play." *Reflexus Anglicanus*, p. 33. 8vo. 1708.

"In 1673, *The Tempest* or the *Inhabited Island*, made into an opera by Mr. Shadwell, having all new in it, as scenes, machines; one scene painted with myriads of aerial spirits, and another flying away, with a table furnished out with fruits, sweetmeats, and all sorts of viands, just when Duke Trinculo and his company were going to dinner; all things were performed in it so admirably well, that not any succeeding opera got more money." *Ibidem*, p. 34.

of *Coriolanus*, *K. Richard II.* *King Lear*, and *Cymbeline* *. Otway's *Caius Marius*, which was produced in 1680, usurped the place of our poet's *Romeo and Juliet* for near seventy years, and Lord Lansdown's *Jew of Venice* kept possession of the stage from the time of its first exhibition in 1701, to the year 1741. Dryden's *All for Love*, from 1678 to 1759, was performed instead of our author's *Antony and Cleopatra*; and D'Avenant's alteration of *Macbeth* in like manner was preferred to our author's tragedy, from its first exhibition in 1663, for near eighty years.

In the year 1700 Cibber produced his alteration of *K. Richard III.* I do not find that this play, which was so popular in Shakspeare's time, was performed from the time of the Restoration to the end of the last century. The play with Cibber's alterations was once performed at Drury Lane in 1703, and lay dormant from that time to the 28th of Jan. 1710, when it was revived at the Opera House in the Haymarket; since which time it has been represented, I believe, more frequently than any of our author's dramas, except *Hamlet*.

On April 23, 1704, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, by command of the Queen, was performed at St. James's, by the actors of both houses, and afterwards publicly represented at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, May 18, in the same year, by Mr. Betterton's company; but although the whole force of his company was exerted in the representation, the piece had so little success, that it was not repeated till Nov. 3, 1720, when it was again revived at the same theatre, and afterwards frequently performed.

From 1709, when Mr. Rowe published his edition of Shakspeare, the exhibition of his plays became much more frequent than before. Between that time and 1740, our poet's *Hamlet*, *Julius Cesar*, *K. Henry VIII.* *Othello*, *K. Richard III.* *King Lear*, and the two parts of *King Henry IV.* were very frequently exhibited. Still, however, such was the wretched taste of the audiences of those days, that in many instances the contemptible alterations of his pieces were preferred to the originals. Dufey's *Injured Princess*, which had not been acted from 1697, was again revived at Drury Lane, October 5, 1717, and afterwards often represented. Even Ravericroft's *Titus Andronicus*, in which all the faults of the original

* *King Richard II.* and *King Lear* were produced by Tate in 1681, before the union of the two companies; and *Coriolanus*, under the title of *The Ingratitude of a Common wealth*, in 1682. In the same year appeared Dufey's alteration of *Cymbeline*, under the title of *The Injured Princess*.

nal are greatly aggravated, took its turn on the scene, and after an intermission of fifteen years was revived at Drury Lane in August 1717, and afterwards frequently performed both at that theatre and the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where it was exhibited for the first time, Dec. 21. 1720. *Coriolanus*, which had not been acted for twenty years, was revived at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Dec. 13, 1718; and in Dec. 1719, *King Richard II.* was revived at the same theatre: but probably neither of these plays was then represented as originally written by Shakspeare. *Measure for Measure*, which had not been acted, I imagine, from the time of the suppression of the theatres in 1642, was revived at the same theatre, Dec. 8, 1720, for the purpose of producing Mr. Quin in the character of the Duke; which he frequently performed with success in that and the following years. *Much ado about nothing*, which had not been acted for thirty years, was revived at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Feb. 9, 1721; but after two representations, on that and the following evening, was laid aside. In Dec. 1723, *King Henry V.* was announced for representation, "on Shakspeare's foundation," and performed at Drury Lane six times in that month; after which we hear of it no more: and on Feb. 26. 1737, *King John* was revived at Covent Garden. Neither of these plays, I believe, had been exhibited from the time of the downfall of the stage. At the same theatre our poet's second part of *King Henry IV.* which had for fifty years been driven from the scene by the play which Mr. Betterton substituted in its place, resumed its station, being produced at Covent Garden, Feb. 16, 1738; and on the 23d of the same month Shakspeare's *K. Henry V.* was performed there as originally written, after an interval, if the theatrical advertisement be correct, of forty years. In the following March the same company once exhibited *the First Part of King Henry VI.* for the first time, as they asserted, for fifty years. *As you like it* was announced for representation at Drury Lane, December 20, 1740, as not having been acted for forty years, and represented twenty-six times in that season. At Goodman's

In the theatrical advertisement, Feb. 6, 1738, *King Richard II.* (which was then produced at Covent Garden,) was said not to have been acted for forty years.

* On the revival of this play in 1720, it was announced as not having been acted for twenty years: but the piece which had been performed in the year 1700, was not Shakspeare's, but Gildon's.

† *King Henry VI.* altered from Shakspeare by Theophilus Cibber, was performed by a summer company at Drury Lane, July 3, 1723; but it mer with no success, being represented only once.

Goodman's Fields, Jan. 15, 1741, *The Winter's Tale* was announced, as not having been acted for one hundred years; but was not equally successful, being only performed nine times. At Drury Lane, Feb. 14, 1741, *The Merchant of Venice*, which, I believe, had not been acted for one hundred years, was once more restored to the scene by Mr. Macklin, who on that night first represented Shylock; a part of which for near fifty years he has performed with unrivalled success. In the following month the company at Goodman's Fields endeavoured to make a stand against him by producing *All's well that ends well*, which, they asserted, "had not been acted since Shakspeare's time." But the great theatrical event of this year was the appearance of Mr. Garrick at the theatre in Goodman's Fields, Oct. 19, 1741; whose good taste led him to study the plays of Shakspeare with more assiduity than any of his predecessors. Since that time, in consequence of Mr. Garrick's admirable performance of many of his principal characters, the frequent representation of his plays in nearly their original state, and above all, the various researches which have been made for the purpose of explaining and illustrating his works, our poet's reputation has been yearly increasing, and is now fixed upon a basis, which neither the lapse of time nor the fluctuation of opinion will ever be able to shake. Here therefore I conclude this imperfect account of the origin and progress of the English Stage.

EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS.

VOL. II.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

Just as this work was issuing from the press, some curious Manuscripts relative to the stage, were found at Dulwich College, and obligingly transmitted to me from thence. One of these is a large folio volume of accounts kept by Mr. Phillip Henslowe, who appears to have been proprietor of the Rose Theatre near the Bankside in Southwark.

The celebrated player, Edward Alleyn, who has erroneously been supposed by Mr. Oldys, the writer of his life in the *Biographia Britannica*, to have had three wives, was married, as appears from an entry in this book, to Joan Woodward, on the 22d of October, 1592, at which time he was about

about twenty-six years old. This lady, who died in 1623, was the daughter of Agnes, the widow of — Woodward, whom Mr. Philip Henslowe, after the death of Woodward, married: so that Mr. Henslowe was not, as has been supposed, Alleyn's father-in-law, but only step-father to his wife.

This Ms. contains a great number of curious notices relative to the dramattick poets of the time, and their productions, from the year 1597 to 1603, during which time Mr. Henslowe kept an exact account of all the money which he disbursed for the various companies of which he had the management, for copies of plays and the apparel which he bought for their representation. I find here notices of a great number of plays now lost, with the authors' names, and several entries that tend to throw a light on various particulars which have been discussed in the preceding *History of the English Stage*, as well as the *Essay on the order of time in which Shakespeare's plays were written*. A still more curious part of this Ms. is a register of all the plays performed by the servants of Lord Strange, and the Lord Admiral, and by other companies, between the 19th of February 1591-2, and November 5, 1597. This register strongly confirms the conjectures that have been hazarded relative to the first part of *King Henry VII.*, and the play which I have supposed to have been written on the subject of *Hamlet*. In a bundle of loose papers has also been found an exact Inventory of the Wardrobe, play-books, properties, &c. belonging to the lord Admiral's servants.

Though it is not now in my power to arrange these very curious materials in their proper places, I am unwilling that the publick should be deprived of the information and entertainment which they may afford; and therefore shall extract from them all such notices as appear to me worthy of preservation.

In the register of plays the same piece is frequently repeated: but of these repetitions I have taken no notice, having transcribed only the account of the first representation of each piece, with the sum which Mr. Henslowe gained by it.

By

¹ It is clear from subsequent entries made by Mr. Henslowe that the sums in the margin opposite to each play, were not the total receipts of the house, but what he received as a proprietor from either half or the whole of the galleries, which appear to have been appropriated to him to reimburse him for expences incurred for dresses, copies, &c. for the theatre. The profit derived from the rooms or boxes, &c. was divided among such of the players as possessed *shares*. In a subsequent page I find

EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS. 239

By the subsequent representations, sometimes a larger, and sometimes a less, sum, was gained. The figures within crotchets shew how often each piece was represented within the time of each account.

"In the name of God, Amen, 1591, beginninge the 19 of february my g. lord Stranges men, as followeth, 1591:

R. at fryer bacon ² , the 19 of february	l.	s.	d.
(laterday). [4]	o.	xvii.	iii.
— mulmurco ³ , the 20 of febr. [11]	o.	xxix.	o.
— orlando ⁴ , the 21 of february [1]	o.	xvi.	vi.
— spanes (Spanish) comedye, don oracio, (Don Horatio) the 23 of february. [3]	o.	xiii.	vi.
— Syr John mandeville, the 24 of february, [5]	o.	xii.	vi.
— harcy of cornwell, (Henry of Cornwall) the 25 of february 1591, [3]	o.	xxxii.	o.
— the Jew of malluse, (Malta) the 26 of february 1591, [10]	o.	l.	o.
— clorys and orgasto the 28 of february 1591, [1]	o.	xviii.	o.
— poope Jone, the 4 of marche 1591, [1]	o.	xv.	o.
— matchavell, the 2 of marche 1591 [3]	o.	xiii.	o.
		R. at	

find—"Here I begynne to receive the whole gallerys from this day, beinge 29 of July, 1598." At the bottom of the account, which ends Oct. 13, 1599, is this note: "Received with the company of my lord of Nottingham men, to this place, being the 13 of October 1599, and yt doth apeare that I have received of the deute which they owe unto me, iij hundred fiftie and eyght pounds."

Again: "Here I begane to receive the gallerys agayne, which they received, begynninge at Mihellmas weeke, being the 6 of October, 1599, as followeth."

Again: "My lord of Pembrokes men beganne to playe at the Rose, the 28 of October, 1600, as followeth:

s. d.
"R. at licke unto licke II. 6.

"R. at Raderick — v. —"

Five shillings could not possibly have been the total receipt of the house, and therefore must have been that which the proprietor received on his separate account.

² Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, by Robert Greene.

³ In a subsequent entry called *Mulamullue*. The play meant was probably *The Battle of Alcazar*. See the first speech:

"This brave barbarian lord, *Muly Moleco*," &c.

⁴ *Orlando Furioso*, by Robert Greene, printed in 1599.

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R. at <i>henry the vi</i> ^s , the 3 of marche	1591, [13]	iii.	vi.	8.
— <i>bendo</i> ⁶ and <i>Richard</i> , the 4 of marche	1591, [3]	O.	xvi.	O.
— <i>iii</i> <i>playes</i> in one ⁷ , the 6 of marche	1591, [4]	iii.	xi.	O.
— <i>the looking-glass</i> ⁸ , the 8 of marche	1591, [4]	O.	vii.	O.
— <i>fenobia</i> , (<i>Zenobia</i>) the 9 of marche	1591, [1]	O.	xxii.	vi.
— <i>Jeronimo</i> , the 14 of marche 1591,	[14]	iii.	xi.	O.
— <i>constantine</i> , the 21 of marche 1591,	[1]	O.	xii.	O.
— <i>Jerusalem</i> ⁹ , the 22 of marche 1591,	[2]	O.	xviii.	O.
— <i>brandymer</i> , the 6 of aprill 1591,	[2]	O.	xxii.	O.
— <i>the comedy of Jeronimo</i> , the 10 of	April 1591, [4]	O.	xxviii.	O.
— <i>Titus and Vespasian</i> , (<i>Titus Vespasian</i>) the 11 of Aprill 1591, [7]		iii.	iii.	O.
— <i>the second pte of tamberzanne</i> , (<i>Tamberlane</i>) the 28 of april 1592,	[5]	iii.	iii.	O.
— <i>the tanner of Denmarke</i> , the 28 of	maye 1592, [1]	iii.	xiii.	O.
— <i>a knacke to know a knave</i> [*] , 10 day	[of June] 1592, [3]	iii.	xii.	O.

" In

⁵ In the *Dissertation on the three parts of K. Henry VI.* I conjectured that the piece which we now call *The first part of K. Henry VI.* was, when first performed, called *The play of K. Henry VI.* We find here that such was the fact. This play, which I am confident was not originally the production of Shakspeare, but of another poet, was extremely popular, being represented in this season between March 3 and June 19, [1591] no less than thirteen times. Hence Nashe in a pamphlet published in this year speaks of ten thousand spectators that had seen it. See *Dissertation*, &c. Vol. VI. p. 390.

⁶ Afterwards written *Byndo*.

⁷ This could not have been the piece called *All's one, or four plays in one*, of which *the Yorksbire Tragedy* made a part, because the fact on which that piece is founded happened in 1605.

⁸ *The Looking glass for London and England*, by Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, printed in 1598.

⁹ Probably *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, by Dr. Thomas Legge. See Wood's *Fast. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 133.

^{*} Printed in 1594.

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" In the name of God Amen, 1592, beginning the 29 of December.

R. at the gelyons comedey (Julian of Brentford) the 5 of Jeneuary 1592,	l.	s.	d.
[1]	o.	xxxiii.	o.
— the comedey of cosmo, the 12 of Jeneuary 1592, [2]	o.	xxxx.	iiii.
— the tragedey of the guyes ¹ , 30 of Jeneuary ² , [1]	iii.	iiii.	o.

" In the name of God, Amen, beginning the 27 of Desember 1593, the earle of Suffex his men.

R. at God spede the plough, [2]	l.	s.	d.
— beewen of Burdockes, (Huon of Bourdeaux) the 28 of Desember 1593, [3]	iii.	i.	o.
— george a green ³ , the 29 of Desember 1593, [4]	iii.	x.	o.
— buckingham, the 30 of Desember 1593, [4]	iii.	x.	o.
— Richard the Confessor ⁴ , the 31 of Desember 1593, [2]	o.	li.	o.
— william the conkerer, the 4 of Jeneuary 1593, [1]	o.	xxxviii.	o.
— frier francis, the 7 of Jeneuary 1593, [3]	o.	xxii.	o.
— the piner of wakefeild ⁵ , the 8 of Jeneuary 1593, [1]	iii.	i.	o.
— abrame & lotte, the 9 of Jeneuary 1593, [3]	o.	xxiii.	o.
— the faire mayd of ytale (Italy) the 12 of Jeneuary 1593, [2]	o.	lii.	o.
— King lude, (Lud) the 18 of Jeneuary 1593, [1]	o.	ix.	o.
— titus and andronicus ⁶ , the 23 of Jeneuary, [3]	o.	xxii.	o.
	iii.	viii.	o.

" In

¹ Probably *The Massacre of Paris*, by Christopher Marlowe.

² In consequence of the great plague in the year 1593, all theatrical entertainments were forbid.

³ This play is printed.

⁴ This piece should seem to have been written by the tinker in *The Taming of the Shrew*, who talks of *Richard Conqueror*.

⁵ This play was printed in 1599.

⁶ The manager of this theatre, who appears to have been extremely illiterate, has made the same mistake in the play of *Titus and Vespasian*. There

EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS.

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R. the 11 of June 1594, at the taming of a shrew ⁴ , [1]	l.	s.	d.
— 12 of June 1594, at the Jew of malta. [18]	o.	ix.	o.
— 18 of June, 1594, at the rangers comedy, [10]	iii.	o.	o.
— 19 of June, at the guies ³ , [10]	o.	xxii.	o.
— 26 of June, 1594, at galiasse ⁶ , [9]	o.	liii.	o.
— 9 of July 1594, at phillipo and bewpolyto ⁷ , [12]	iii.	o.	o.
— 19 of July 1594, at the 2 pte of Godfrey of Bullen, [11]	iii.	o.	o.
— 30 of July 1594, at the marchant of camdew ⁸ , [1]	iii.	viii.	o.
— 12 of August 1594, at tassoes mellencoley ⁹ , [13]	iii.	o.	o.
— 15 of August 1594, at mabometti ¹ , [8]	iii.	v.	o.
— 25 of August 1594, at the venesyan (Venetian) comedy, [11]	o.	l.	vi.
— 28 of August 1594, at tamberlen, [23]	iii.	xi.	o.
— 17 of september 1594, at palamon & arfett ² , [4]	o.	li.	o.
— 24 of september 1594, at Venesyon & the love of and. [an] Ingleske lady, [1]	o.	xxxvii.	o.
Vol. II.	M	R. the	

of the ghost in this piece in the summer of 1594, without doubt it is, that Dr. Lodge alludes, in his *Wits Miserie*, &c. 4to. 1596, when he speaks of "a foul lubber, who looks as pale as the vizard of the ghost, who cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge*."

⁴ The play which preceded Shakspeare's. It was printed in 1607. There is a slight variation between the titles; our poet's piece being called *The Taming of the Shrew*.

⁵ *The Guise*. It is afterwards called *The Massacre*, i. e. *The Massacre of Paris*, by Christopher Marlowe.

⁶ *Q. Julius Caesar*.

⁷ This is probably the play which a knavish bookseller above sixty years afterwards entered on the Stationers' books as the production of Philip Massinger. See p. 190, n. 2.

⁸ *Q. — of Candia*.

⁹ *Tasso's Melancholy*. "I rather spited than pitied him, (says old Montagne) when I saw him at Ferrara, in so pitious a plight, that he survived himselfe, mis-acknowledging both himselfe and his labours, which, unwitting to him and even to his face, have been published both uncorrected and maimed." Florio's translation, 1603.

¹ Probably Peele's play, entitled *Mubomet and Hiren, the Fair Greek*.

² *Palamon and Arcitiz*. On this old play *The Two noble Kinsmen* was probably founded.

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R. the 30 of september 1594, at <i>doctor</i>	<i>1.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
<i>stoff</i> ¹ , [24]	iii.	xii.	o.
— 4 of october 1594, at <i>the love of</i>			
<i>a gresyan lady</i> , [12]	o.	xxvi.	o.
— 18 of october 1594, at <i>the frenshe</i>			
<i>doctor</i> , [11]	o.	xxii.	o.
— 22 of october 1594, at <i>a knacke to</i>			
<i>know a noneste</i> ² , [19]	o.	xxxx.	o.
— 8 of november 1594, at <i>ceser &</i>			
<i>pompie</i> ³ , [8]	iii.	ii.	o.
— 16 of november 1594, at <i>deoclesyan</i> ,			
[2]	o.	xxxiii.	o.
— 30 of november 1594, at <i>warlam</i>			
<i>chester</i> , [7]	o.	xxxviii.	o.
— 2 of desember 1594, at <i>the wise</i>			
<i>men of chester</i> , [20]	o.	xxviii.	o.
— 14 of desember 1594, at <i>the marwe</i> ⁴ ,			
[4]	o.	xxxiii.	o.
— 19 of desember 1594, at <i>the 2 pte</i>			
<i>of tamberlen</i> , [11]	o.	xxxvi.	o.
— 26 of desember 1594, at <i>the sege</i>			
<i>of london</i> , [12]	iii.	iii.	o.
— 11 of febreary 1594, at <i>the frenshe</i>			
<i>comedei</i> , [6]	o.	1.	o.
— 14 of febreary 1594, at <i>long mege</i>			
<i>of westmester</i> , [18]	iii.	ix.	o.
— 21 of febreary 1594, at <i>the macke</i> ⁵ ,			
[1]	iii.	o.	o.
— 5 of marche 1594, at <i>seleo & olem-</i>			
<i>po</i> ⁶ , [7]	iii.	o.	o.
— 7 of maye 1595, at <i>the first pte of</i>			
<i>Herculous</i> ⁷ , [10]	iii.	xiii.	o.
— 23 of maye 1595, at <i>the 2 p. of</i>			
<i>Hercolaus</i> , [8]	iii.	x.	o.
— 3 of June 1595, at <i>the vii dayes of</i>			
<i>the weeke</i> , [19]	iii.	o.	o.
		R. the	

¹ *Dr Faustus*, by Christopher Marlowe.² *A knack to know an honest man*. This play was printed in 1596.³ Stephen Gosson mentions a play entitled *The History of Caesar and Pompey*, which was acted before 1580.⁴ The *marw* was a game at cards. The play is afterwards called *The suit (suit) at marw*.⁵ This also was a game at cards.⁶ *Seleo* is afterwards written *Selyo*, and the play is in a subsequent entry called *Olempo* and *Hengengys*.⁷ *Hercules*, written by Martin Slaughter.

R. the 18 of June 1595, at the 2 ^d pte of	l.	s.	d.
<i>sefore</i> , (Cæsar ^s) [2]	o.	lv.	o.
— 20 of June 1595, at antony & val-			
lea ^s , [3]	o.	xx.	o.
— 29 of august 1595, at longe-shancke ¹ ,			
[14]	o.	xxxx.	o.
— 5 of september 1595, at cracke mee			
this notte, [16]	iii.	o.	o.
— 17 of september 1595, at the			
worldes tragedy, [11]	iii.	v.	o.
— 2 of october 1595, at the desgyfes,			
[6]	o.	xxxiii.	o.
— 15 of october 1595, at the won-			
der of a woman, [10]	o.	liii.	o.
— 29 of october 1595, at barnardo			
& fiamata, [7]			
— 14 of november 1595, at a toye to			
please my ladye ² , [7]			
— 28 of november 1595, at barry the			
v. ³ , [13]	iii.	vi.	o.
— 29 of november 1595, at the welshbe-			
man, [1]	o.	vii.	o.
— 3 of Jenewary 1595, at chinon of			
Ingland, [11]	o.	i.	o.
— 15 of Jenewary 1595, at pethage-			
rus ⁴ , [13]	o.	xviii.	o.
— 3 of febreary 1595, at the 1 ^p . of			
Fortunatus ⁵ , [7]	iii.	o.	o.
— 12 of febreary 1595, at the blind			
beger of Alexandria ⁶ , [13]	iii.	o.	o.
— 29 of aprill 1596, at Julian the			
apostata, [3]	o.	xxxxvii.	o.
— 19 of maye 1596, at the tragedie of			
ffocasse ⁷ , [7]	o.	xxxv.	o.

M 2

R. the

¹ Probably on the subject of Shakspeare's play.

² This piece was entered in the Stationers' books by Humphrey Mosely, June 29, 1660, as the production of Philip Massinger.

³ Probably Peele's play, entitled *The famous Chronicle of King Edward I.* named *Edward Long-shankes*, printed in 1593.

⁴ Afterwards called *A toy to please chaste ladies*.

⁵ I suppose, the play entitled *The famous victories of King Henry V.* containing the honourable battel of Agincourt, 1598, in which may be found the rude outlines of our poet's two parts of *K. Henry IV.* and *K. Henry V.*

⁶ *Pythagoras*, written by Martin Slaughter.

⁷ By Thomas Dekker. This play is printed.

⁸ By George Chapman. Printed in 1598.

⁹ *Phocas*, by Martin Slaughter.

R. the 22 of June 1596, at <i>Troye</i> , [4]	l.	iii.	d.
— 1 of July 1596, at <i>paradox</i> , [1]	o.	xxxiv.	o.
— 18 of July 1596, at <i>the tinsker of totnes</i> ,	iii.	o.	o.

“ *In the name of God, Amen, beginning one [on] Simone and Jewds day, my lord admeralles men, as followeth; 1596.*

[Here twenty plays are set down as having been performed between October 27, and November 15, 1596; but their titles have been already given.]

“ *In the name of God, Amen, beginnigne the 25 of november 1596, as followeth, the lord admerall players:*

R. the 4 of defember 1596, at <i>Kalteger</i> ,	l.	iii.	d.
[12]	o.	xxxv.	o.
— 11 of defember 1596, at <i>Stewkley</i> *,	o.	xxxx.	o.
[11]	o.	xxx.	o.
— 19 of defember 1596, at <i>nebuca-</i> <i>nizer</i> , [8]	o.	l.	o.
— 30 of defember 1596, at <i>what will</i> <i>be shall be</i> , [12]	o.	lv.	o.
— 14 of Jenewary 1597, at <i>alexander</i> <i>& lodwike</i> , [15]	6.	7.	8.
— 27 of Jenewary 1597, at <i>woman</i> <i>hard to please</i> , [12]	3.	2.	1.
— 5 of febreary 1597, at <i>Ofernyck</i> , [2]	-	-	-
— 19 of marche 1597, at <i>guido</i> , [5] ⁹	-	-	-
— 7 of aprill 1597, at <i>v plays in one</i> , [10]	-	-	-
— 13 of aprill 1597, at <i>times triumph</i> <i>and fortus</i> , [1]	-	-	-
— 29 of aprill 1597, at <i>Uter pendra-</i> <i>gon</i> , [5]	-	-	-
— 11 of maye 1597, at <i>the comedy of</i> <i>umers</i> , (humours') [11]	-	-	-
— 26 of maye 1597, at <i>barey the fiste</i> <i>life and death</i> ² , [6]	-	-	-

R. the

* This play was printed in black letter in 1605.

⁹ The sums received by Mr. Henslowe from this place are ranged in five columns, in such a manner as to furnish no precise information.

¹ Perhaps Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his humour*. It will appear hereafter that he had money dealings with Mr. Henslowe, the manager of this theatre, and that he wrote for him. The play might have been afterwards purchased from this company by the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, by whom it was acted in 1598.

² This could not have been the play already mentioned, because in that Henry does not die; nor could it have been Shakspeare's play.

- R. the 3 of June 1597, at *frederycke*
and basellers, [4]
— 22 of June 1597, at *Henges*, [1]
— 30 of June 1597, at *life and death of*
Martin Swarte, [3]
— 14 of July 1597, at the *wiche*
[witch] of Islyngton, [2]
" In the name of God, Amen, the 11 of October beganne my lord
admeralls and my lord of pembrokes men to playe at my
bowse, 1597:
October 11. at *Jeronymo*,
12. at the *comedy of umers*,
16. at *docter softes*,
19. at *hardacnute*,
31. at *frier spendelton*,
November 2. at *Bourbon*."

The following curious paper furnishes us with more accurate knowledge of the properties, &c. of a theatre in Shakspeare's time, than the researches of the most industrious antiquary could have attained.

" The booke of the Inventory of the goods of my Lord Admeralles men, taken the 10 of Marche in the yeare 1598.
Gone and losse.

Item, j orange taney fatten dublet, layd thicke with gowld lace.

Item, j blew tafetie sewt.

Item, j payr of carnayon fatten Venesyons, layd with gold lace.

Item, j longe-shanckes sewte.

Item, j Sponnes dublet pyncket.

Item, j Spanerds gyrrcken.

Item, j Harey the fyfies dublet.

Item, j Harey the fyfies velvet gowne.

Item, j fryers gowne.

Item, j lyttell dublet for boye.

" The Enventary of the Clownes Sewtes and Hermetes Sewtes, with diuers other sewtes, as followeth, 1598, the 10 of March.

Item, j senetores gowne, j hooke, and 5 senetores capes.

Item, j sewtte for Nepton; Fierdrackes sewtes for Dobe.

Item,

² Afterwards written—*Baselia*.

⁴ This piece was performed a second time on the 28th of July, when this account was closed.

- Item*, iiij genefareyes gownes, and iiij torchberers fewtes.
Item, iij payer of red strasers, [stroffers] and iij fares gowne of buckrome.
Item, iiij Herwodes cottes, and iij fogers cottes, and j green gown for Maryan.
Item, vj grene cottes for Roben Hoode, and iiij knaves fewtes.
Item, ij payer of grene hofse, and Anderfones fewte. j whitt shepen clocke.
Item, ij roffet cottes, and j black frese cotte, and iij prestes cottes.
Item, ij whitt sheperdes cottes, and ij Danes fewtes, and j payer of Danes hofse.
Item, The Mores lymes^s, and Hercolles lymes, and Will. Sommers fewtte.
Item, ij Orlates fewtes, hates and gorgetts, and vij anteckes cootes.
Item, Cathemer fewte, j payer of cloth whitte flockens, iiij Turckes hedes.
Item, iiij freyers gownes and iiij hoodes to them, and j fooles coate, cape, and babell, and branhowlttes bodeys, [bodyce] and merlen [Merlin's] gowne and cape.
Item, ij black saye gownes, and ij cotton gownes, and j rede saye gowne.
Item, j mawe gowne of callico for the quene^d, j carnowll cardinal's hatte.
Item, j red fewt of cloth for pyge [Psyche] layed with whitt lace.
Item, v payer of hofse for the clowne, and v gerkenes for them.
Item, iiij payer of canvas hofse for asane, ij payer of black strocers.
Item, j yellow leather dublett for a clowne, j Whittcomes dublett poke.
Item, Eves bodeyes, [bodyce] j pedante trusser, and iij donnes hattes.
Item, j payer of yelow cotton sleeves, j gosses fewt, and j gosses bodeyes.

Item,

^s I suspect that these werethe limbs of Aaron the Moor in *Titus Andronicus*, who in the original play was probably tortured on the stage. This ancient exhibition was so much approved of by Ravenscroft, that he introduced it in his play.—In *The Battle of Alcazar* there is also Moor, whose dead body is brought on the stage, but not in a dislocated state.

^d In the play called *Maro*.

Item, xvij copes and hattes, Verones sonnes hoffs.

Item, iij trumpettes and a drum, and a trebel viall, a basse viall, a bandore, a fytteren, j anshente, [ancient] j whitt hatte.

Item, j hatte for Robin Hoode, j hobihorfe.

Item, v shertes, and j serpelowes, [surplice] iijj ferdingalles.

Item, vj head-tiers, j fane, [fan] iijj rebatos, ij gyrketrufes.

Item, j longe forde.

" *The Enventary of all the aparell for my Lord Admeralles men, taken the 10 of marche 1598.*—*Least above in the tier-house in the cheast.*

Item, My Lord Casses [Caiphas'] gereken, and his hoffs.

Item, j payer of hoffs for the Dowlsen [Dauphin.]

Item, j murey lether gyrcken, & j white lether gercken.

Item, j black lether gearken, & Nabesathe sewte.

Item, j payer of hoffs, & a gercken for Valteger.

Item, ij lether anteckes cottres with basses, for Fáyeton [Phaeton].

Item, j payer of bodeyes for Alles Alice⁷ Pearce.

" *The Enventary taken of all the properties for my Lord Admeralles men, the 10 of Marche 1598.*

Item, j rocke, j cage, j tombe, j Helle mought [Hellmouth].

Item, j tome of Guido, j tome of Dido, j bedsteade.

Item, viij lances, j payer of stayers for Fayeton.

Item, ij itepells, and j chyme of belles, and j beacon.

Item, j hecfor for the playe of Faeton, the limes dead.

Item, j globe, & j golden scepter; iij clobes [clubs].

Item, ij marchepanes, & the sittie of Rome.

Item, j gowlden flece; ij rackets; j baye tree.

Item, j wooden hatchett; j lether hatchete.

Item, j wooden canepie; owld Mahemetes head.

Item, j lyone skin; j beares skyne; and Faetones lymes, & Faeton charete; & Argosse [Argus's] heade.

Item, Nepun [Neptune's] forccke and garland.

Item, j crosers stafe; Kentes woden leage [leg.]

Item, Ierosses [Iris's] head, & raynhowe; j littell alter.

Item, viij viserdes; Tamberlyne brydell; j wooden matook.

Item, Cupees bowe, & quiver; the clothe of the Sone & Mone⁷

Item,

⁷ Here we have the only attempt which this Inventory furnishes of any thing like scenery, and it was undoubtedly the *ne plus ultra* of those days. To exhibit a sun or moon, the art of perspective was not necessary.

- Item, j bores heade & Serberosse (Cerberus) iij heades.
 Item, j Cadefeus; ij mose (moss) banckes, & j snake.
 Item, ij fanes of feathers; Belendon stable; j tree of
 gowlden apelles; Tantelouse tre; jx eyorn (iron)
 targates.
 Item, j copper targate, & xvij foyles.
 Item, iij wooden targates; j greve armer.
 Item, j syne (sign) for Mother Readcap; j buckler.
 Item, Mercurus wings; Tasso pichter; j helmet with a
 dragon; j shelde, with iij lyones; j elme bowle.
 Item, j chayne of dragons; j gylte speare.
 Item, ij coffenes; j bulles head; and j vylter.
 Item, iij tymbrells; j dragon in fostes [Faustus].
 Item, j lyone; ij lyon heades; j great horse with his leages
 [legs]; j sack-bute.
 Item, j whell & frame in the Sege of London.
 Item, j paire of rowghte gloves.
 Item, j poopes miter.
 Item, iij Imperial crownes; j playne crowne.
 Item, j gostes crowne; j crown with a sone.
 Item, j frame for the heading in Black Jone.
 Item, j black dogge.
 Item, j cauderm for the Jewe *.

** The Enventorey of all the aparell of the Lord Admeralles
 men, taken the 13th of March 1598, as followeth:*

- Item, j payer of whitte saten Venesons cut with coper lace.
 Item, j ash collar fatten doublett, lacyd with gold lace.
 Item, j peche collar fatten doublett.
 Item, j owld whitte fatten doublett.
 Item, j bleu tafitie sewtte.
 Item, j Mores cotte.
 Item, Pyges (Psyches) damask gowne.
 Item, j black fatten cotte.
 Item, j harcoller tafitie sewtte of pygges.
 Item, j white tafitie sewtte of pygges.
 Item, Vartemar sewtte.
 Item, j great pechecoller dublet, with sylver lace.
 Item, j white fatten dublet pynckte.
 Item, j owld white fatten dublet pynckte.
 Item, j payer of fatten Venesyan fatten ymbradered.
 Item, j payer of French hosse, cloth of gowld.
 Item, j payer of cloth of gowld hosse with sylver paines.
 Item, j payer of cloth of silver hosse with fatten and sylver
 panes.

Item,

** The Jew of Malta.*

- Item, Tamberlynes cotte, with copier lace.
 Item, j read clock with white copier lace.
 Item, j read clocke with read copier lace.
 Item, j shorte clocke of taneý fatten with sleeves.
 Item, j shorte clocke of black fatten with sleeves.
 Item, Labefyas clocke, with gowld buttones.
 Item, j payer of read cloth hose of Venesyans, with sylver lace of copier.
 Item, Valteger robe of rich taffie.
 Item, Junoes cotte.
 Item, j hode for the wech (witch.)
 Item, j read stamel clocke with whitte copier lace.
 Item, j read stamel clocke with read copier lace.
 Item, j cloth clocke of russete with copier lace, called Guydoes clocke.
 Item, j short clocke of black velvet; with sleeves faced with shagg.
 Item, j short clocke of black velvet, faced with white fore (fur).
 Item, j manes gown, faced with whitte fore.
 Item, Dobes cotties of cloth of sylver.
 Item, j payer of pechecoler Venesyones, uncutt, with read copier lace.
 Item, j read scarlet clocke with sylver buttones.
 Item, j longe black velvet clocke, layd with brod lace blacke.
 Item, j black fatten sewtte.
 Item, j blacke velvet clocke, layed with twyft lace blacke.
 Item, Perowes sewt, which W^m. Sley were.
 Item, j payer of pechecoler hose with sylver corled panes.
 Item, j payer of black cloth of sylver hose, drawne owt with tufed taffie.
 Item, Tamberlanes breeches, of crymson vellvet.
 Item, j payer of sylk howse with panes of sylver corled lace.
 Item, j Faeytone sewtte.
 Item, Roben Hoodes sewtte.
 Item, j payer of cloth of gowld hose with gowld corle panes.
 Item, j payer of rowne hose buffe with gowld lace.
 Item, j payer of mows (mouse) collar Venesyans with R. brode gowld lace.
 Item, j flame collarde dublet pynked.
 Item, j blacke fatten dublet, layd thyeck with blacke and gowld lace.
 Item, j carnacyon dubled cutt, layd with gowld lace.

- Item, j white fatten dublet, faced with read tafetic.
- Item, j grene gyrcken with fylver lace.
- Item, j black gyrcken with fylver lace.
- Item, j read gyrcken with fylver lace.
- Item, j read Spanes (Spanish) dublett flyched.
- Item, j pechte collar fatten casse.
- Item, Tafoes robe.
- Item, j murey robe with sleeves.
- Item, j blewe robe with sleeves.
- Item, j oren taney (orange tawny) robe with sleeves.
- Item, j pech collerd halff robe.
- Item, j lane (long) robe with spangells.
- Item, j white & orange taney skarf spangled.
- Item, Dides (Dido's) robe.
- Item, iij payer of baffes.
- Item, j white tafitie sherte with gowld frence.
- Item, the fryers truffle in Roben Hood.
- Item, j littell gacket for Pygge (Psyche).
- Item, j womanes gown of cloth of gowld.
- Item, j orange taney vellet gowe (gown) with fylver lace, for women.
- Item, j black velvet gowne ymbradered with gowld lace.
- Item, j yelow fatten gowne ymbradered with fylk & gowld lace, for women.
- Item, j greve armer.
- Item, Harye the v. velvet gowne.
- Item, j payer of crymson fatten Venysones, layd with gowld lace.
- Item, j blew tafitie sewte, layd with fylver lace.
- Item, j Longeshankes seute.
- Item, j orange collar fatten dublet, layd with gowld lace.
- Item, Harye the v. fatten dublet, layd with gowld lace.
- Item, j Spanes casse dublet of crymson pynched.
- Item, j Spanes gearcken layd with fylver lace.
- Item, j wattshode (watchet) tafitie dublet for a boye.
- Item, ij payer of baffes, j whitte, j blewe, of safnett.
- Item, j. freyers gowne of graye.

EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS. 253

A Note of all such boockes as belong to the Stocke, and such as I have bought since the 3d of March, 1598.

Black Jonne.	Woman will have her will.
The Umers.	Welchmans price.
Hardicanewtes.	King Arthur, life and death.
Borbonne.	1 p ^t of Hercules.
Sturgflatercy.	2 p ^t of Hercoles.
Brunhowlle.	Pethagores.
Cobler quen hive.	Focasse.
Frier Pendelton.	Elxfander and Lodwicke.
Alls Perce.	Blacke Battman.
Read Cappe.	2 p. black Battman.
Roben Hode, 1.	2 p ^t of Goodwine.
Roben Hode, 2.	Mad mans morris.
Phaeyton.	Perce of Winchester.
Treangell cockowlls.	Vayvode.
Goodwine.	

A Note of all suche goodes as I have bought for the Company of my Lord Admirals men, sence the 3 of Aprell, 1598, as followeth :

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Bowght a damaske casock garded with velvett	0	18	0
Bowght a payer of paned rownd hosse of cloth whiped with sylk, drawne out with tastie,	0	8	0
Bowght j payer of long black wollen stockens,			
Bowght j black satten dublett	4	15	0
Bowght j payer of rownd howsse paned of velle-vet			
Bowght a robe for to goo invisebell	3	10	0
Bowght a gown for Nembia			
Bowght a dublett of whitt satten layd thicke with gowld lace, and a payer of rowne pandes hosse of cloth of sylver, the panes layd with gowld lace	7	0	0
Bowght of my sonne v fewtes			
Bowght of my sonne iiij fewtes	20	0	0
	17	0	0

In the folio manuscript already mentioned I have found notices of the following plays, and their severall authors:

Oct. 1597. *The Cobler.*

Dec. 1597. *Mother Redcap*, by Anthony Mundy⁴, and Michael Drayton.

Jan.

⁴ "The best for comedy amongst us bee, Edward Earle of Oxforde, Dr. Gager of Oxforde, Maister Rowleye, once a rare scholler of learned Pembroke

Jan. 1597-8. *Dido and Æneas.*

Phaeton, by Thomas Dekker³.

The World runs upon Wheels, by G. Chapman.

Feb.

1597-8.

The first part of Robin Hood, by Anthony Mundy⁶.

The second part of the downfall of earl Huntington, surnamed Robin Hood, by Anthony Mundy, and Henry Chettle.

A woman will have her will, by William Haughton⁸.

The Miller, by Robert Lee.

"A booke wherein is a part of a Welchman," by Michael Drayton and Henry Chettle⁹.

Mar. 1598.

The Triplicity of Cuckolds, by Thomas Dekker.

The famous wars of Henry the First and the Prince of Wales, by Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker¹.

Earl

Pembroke Hall in Cambridge, Maister Edwardes, one of her Majesties chappell, eloquent and witty John Lily, Lodge, Gascoyne, Greene, Shakspeare, Thomas Nashe, Anthony Munday our best plotter, Chapman, Porter, Wilson, Hathway, and Henry Chettle." *Wits Treasury, being the Second Part of Wits Common Wealth*, by Francis Meres, 1598, p. 283. The latter writer, Henry Chettle, is the person whose testimony with respect to our poet's merit as an actor has been already produced. Chettle, it appears, wrote singly, or in conjunction with others, not less than thirty plays, of which one only (*Hoffman's Tragedy*) is now extant.

⁵ In the following month I find this entry:

"Lent unto the company, the 4 of February 1598, to discharge Mr. Dicker owt of the cownter in the powltre, the some of fortie shillings, I say, dd [delivered] to Thomas Downton, xxxs."

⁶ In a subsequent page is the following entry: Lent unto Robarte Shawe, the 18 of Novemb. 1598, to lend unto Mr. Cheattle, upon the mending of *the first part of Robert Hoode*, the sum of xs."

And afterwards—"For mending of *Robin Hood* for the corte."

This piece and its second part have hitherto, on the authority of Kirkman, been falsely ascribed to Thomas Heywood.

⁷ Printed in 1616, under the title of *Englishtown for my money, or a woman will have her will*.

⁸ The only notice of this poet that I have met with, except what is contained in these sheets, is the following: "Lent unto Robert Shawe, the 10 of March 1599, [1600] to lend Mr. Haughton out of *the clyke*, the some of xs."

⁹ Perhaps *The Valiant Welchman*, printed in 1615.

¹ There was a play on this subject written by R. Davenport, and acted by the king's company in 1624; as appears by Sir Henry Herbert's Manuscript. Perhaps it was only the old play new-modelled. It was afterwards (1660) entered on the Stationers' books by a knavish bookseller, and ascribed to Shakspeare.

Subjoined to the account of this play is the following article: Lent at that time unto the company, for to spend at the reading of that booke at the sonne [Sun] in new Fish-Street, vs."

- Earl Goodwin and his three sons*², by Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and Robert Wilson.
- The second Part of Goodwin*, &c. by Michael Drayton.
- Pierce of Exton*³, by the same four authors.
- April 1598. *The Life of Arthur king of England*, by Richard Hathwaye.
- The first part of Black Batman of the North*, by Henry Chettle.
- The second part of Black Batman*, by Henry Chettle, and Robert Wilson.
- May 1598. *The first part of Hercules*,
The second part of Hercules,
Phocas,
Pythagoras,
Alexander and Lodowick.⁴ } by Martin Slaughter.
- Love prevented*, by Henry Porter.
- The funeral of Richard Cordelion*, by Robert Wilson, Henry Chettle, Anthony Mundy, and Michael Drayton.
- June 1598. *The Will of a Woman*, by George Chapman.
- The Mad Man's Morris*, by Robert Wilson, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker.
- Hannibal and Hermes*, by Robert Wilson, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker.
- July 1598. *Valentine and Orson*, by Richard Hathwaye, and Anthony Mundy.
- Pierce of Winchelsea*, by Thos. Dekker, Robert Wilson, and Michael Drayton.
- The Play of a Woman*, by Henry Chettle.
- The Conquest of Brute, with the first finding of the Bath*, by John Daye, Henry Chettle, and John Singer¹.
- Aug.

² "Lent unto Thomas Dowton the 11 of April 1598, to bye ta-
 stie to make a rochet for the bishoppe in earle Goodwine. xxliij s."

³ I suppose a play on the subject of *K. Richard II.*

⁴ "Lent unto the company the 16 of Maye 1598, to bye v boockes
 of Martin Slather, called 2 ptes of Hercolus, & focas, and pethagores, and
 alyxander and lodieck, which last boocke he hath not yet delyvered, the
 some of vii li." He afterwards received 20 s. more on delivering the
 play last named.—He was a player, and one of the Lord Admiral's Ser-
 vants.

These plays, we have already seen, had been acted some years before.
 It appears from various entries in this book, that the price of an old
 play, when transferred from one theatre to another, was two pounds.

¹ I find in a subsequent page, "Lent unto Sam. Rowley, the 12 of
 Desember, 1598, to bye divers thinges for to make cottes for gyants in
 Brute, the some of xx s."

- Aug. 1598. *Hot anger soon cold*, by Henry Porter, Henry Chettle, and Benjamin Jonson.
William Longsword, by Michael Drayton.
Chance Medly, by Robert Wilfon, Anthony Mundy, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker.
Catlines Conspiracy, by Robert Wilfon, and Henry Chettle.
Vaywoode, by Thomas Downton.
Worse feared than hurt, by Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker.
- Sept. 1598. *The First Civil Wars in France*, by the same authors.
The Second Part of the Civil Wars in France, by the same.
The Third Part of the Civil Wars in France, by the same.
The Fountain of new Fashions, by George Chapman.
Mulmutius Donwallow, by William Rankins.
Connan, Prince of Cornwall, by Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker.
- Nov. 1598. *'Tis no deceit to deceive the deceiver*, by Henry Chettle.
- Dec. 1598. *War without blows and Love without suit*, by Thomas Heywood. In a subsequent entry
 " ——— Love without strife."
The Second Part of the Two Angry Women of Abington, by Henry Porter.
- Feb. 1598-9. *Joan as good as my lady*, by Thos. Heywood².
 Friar

² Thomas Heywood had written for the stage in 1596, for in another page I find—" Octob. 14, 1596. Lent unto them [the Lord Admiral's Servants] for Hawodes booke, xxx's." From another entry in the same page it appears that *Fletcher* wrote for the stage so early as in the year 1596. " Octob. 14, 1596. Lent unto Martyne [Martin Slaughter] to fetch *Fletcher*, vis." Again, *ibidem*: " Gave the company to give *Fletcher*, and the have promised me payment,—xxs."—Heywood was in the year 1598 an *hireling*, by which name all the players who were not *shareers*, were denominated. They received a certain sum by the week. In Mr. Henslowe's book the following article occurs:

" Memorandum, that this 25 of Marche, 1598, Thomas Hawoode came and hiered him sealse with me as a covenanted servante for ij yeares, by the receveing of ij syngell pence, according to the statute of Winchester, and to beginne at the daye above written, and not to playe any wher publicke about lundon, not whille these ij yeares be expired, but in my howse. Yf he do, then he doth forfeitt unto me by the receving of this ii d. fortie powndes. And witness to this, Anthony Monday, William Borpe,

- Friar Fox and Gillian of Brentford*, by Thos. Downton, and Samuel Redly.
- Aeneas' Revenge, with the tragedy of Polyphemus*, by Henry Chettle.
- The Two Merry Women of Abington*³, by Henry Porter.
- The Four Kings*.
- March *The Spencers*, by Henry Porter.
- 1598-9. *Orestes' furies*, by Thomas Dekker.
- June *Agamemnon*, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker.
1599. *The Gentle Craft*, by Thomas Dekker.
- Bear a brain*, by Thomas Dekker.
- Aug. *The Poor Man's Paradise*, by Wm. Haughton.
1599. *The Stepmother's Tragedy*, by Henry Chettle.
- The lamentable tragedy of Peg of Plymouth*, by Wm. Bird, Thos. Downton, and Wm. Jubey.
- Nov. *The Tragedy of John Cox of Colmiston*, by Wm. Haughton and John Day.
- 1599.

The

Borne, Gabriel Spencer, Thomas Downton, Robert Shawe, Richard Jones, Richard Alleyn."

William Borne, *alias* Bird, a dramatick poet, whose name frequently occurs in this manuscript, was likewise an *hireling*, as is ascertained by a memorandum, worth transcribing on another account:

"Memorandum, that the 10 of august, 1597, Wm. Borne came and offered him seaffe to come and play with my lord admiralles men at my house called by the name of the Rose, setewate one [on] the banck, after this order followinge. He hath received of me ijd. upon and [an] assumpsett to forfett unto me a hundreth marches, of lafull money of Ingland, yf he do not perform thes thinges following; that is, presentley after libertie beinge granted for playinge, to come & to playe with my lorde admiralles men at my howse asforlayd, & not in any other howse publick abowt london, for the space of iij years beinge immediatly after this restraynt is receiled by the lordes of the counsell, which restraynt is by the menes of playinge *the Feyle of Doges* [Ile of Dogs.] Yf he do not, then he forfettis this asumpset afore, or ells not. Witnes to this E. Alleyn & Robfone."

The stipend of an hireling is ascertained by the following memorandum:

"Memorandum, that the 27 of Jewley 1597, I heayred Thomas Hearne with ij pence for to serve me ij yeares in the qualetie of playenge, for *five shillings* a weeke for one yeare, and vi s. viii d. for the other yere, which he hath covenanted him seaffe to serve me, & not to depart from my company till thes ij yeares is ended. Witnes to this, John Synger, James Donston, Thomas Towne.

³ The note relative to this play is worth preserving. "Lent unto Harey Porter, at the request of the company, in earnest of his booke called *ij merrey women of abington*, the some of forty shellengs, and for the refayte of that money he gave me his faythfull promise that I shold have alle his bookes which he writte ether him selfe or with any ether, which some was dd. [delivered] the 28th of february 1598."

- The second part of Henry Richmond*, by Robert Willson⁴.
- The Tragedy of Thomas Merry*, by William Haughton, and John Day.
- Dec: 1599. *Patient Griffell*, by Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and William Haughton.
- The Arcadian Virgin*, by Henry Chettle, and William Haughton.
- Jan. 1599-1600. *Owen Tudor*, by Michael Drayton, Richard Hathwaye, Anthony Mundy, and Rt. Willson.
- The Italian Tragedy*, by John Day.
- Jugurtha*, by William Boyle.
- Truth's Supplication to Candlelight*, by Tho. Dekker.
- The Spanish Morris*, by Thomas Dekker, Wm. Haughton, and John Day.
- Damon and Pythias*, by Henry Chettle.
- March 1599-1600. *The Seven Wise Masters*, by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, and John Day.
- April 1600. *Ferrex and Porrex*⁵, by Wm. Haughton.
- The English Fugitives*, by the same.
- The Golden As and Cupid and Psyche*, by Thomas Dekker, John Daye, and Henry Chettle.
- The Wooing of Death*, by Henry Chettle.
- Alice Pierce*.
- Strange news out of Poland*, by William Haughton, and ——— Pett.
- The Blind Beggar of Bethnell Green*, by Henry Chettle, and John Day.
- June 1600. *The Fair Constance of Rome*, by Anthony Mundy, Richard Hathwaye, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker.
- The second part of the fair Constance of Rome*, by the same.
- December 1600. *Robin Hood's Penn'orths*, by Wm. Haughton.
- Hannibal and Scipio*, by Richard Hathwaye, and William Rankins.

Feb.

⁴ For this piece the poet received eight pounds. The common price was six pounds.

⁵ Here and above, (see *Damon and Pythias*) we have additional instances of old plays being re-written. There was a dramatick piece by Lord Buckhurst and Thomas Norton, with the title of *Ferrex and Porrex*, printed in 1570. *Damon and Pythias*, by Richard Edwards, was printed in 1582.

- Feb. *Scogan and Skelton*, by the same.
- 1600-1. *The Second Part of Thomas Strowde*⁶, by William Haughton, and John Day⁷.
- March *The conquest of Spain by John of Gaunt*, by Richard Hathwaye, — Hawkins, John Day, and Wm. Haughton.
- All is not gold that glisters*, by Samuel Rowley, and Henry Chettle.
- April *The Conquest of the West Indies*, by Wentworth Smith, William Haughton, and John Day.
1601. *Sebastian king of Portugal*, by Henry Chettle, and Thomas Dekker.
- The Six Yeomen of the West*, by William Haughton, and John Day.
- The Third Part of Thomas Strowde*, by Wm. Haughton, and John Day.
- The honourable life of the humorous earl of Gloster, with his conquest of Portugal*, by Anthony Wadefon.
- Aug. 12. *Cardinal Wolfey*⁸, by Henry Chettle.
1601. *The proud woman of Antwerp*, by William Haughton, and John Day.
- The Second Part of Thomas Dough*, by John Day, and William Haughton.
- Sept. 1601. *The Orphan's tragedy*, by Henry Chettle.
- Nov. 12. *The Rising of Cardinal Wolfey*⁹, by Anthony Mundy, Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smith.
- The Six Clotbiers of the west*, by Richard Hathwaye, Wentworth Smith, and Wm. Haughton.

The

⁶ This play appears to have been sometimes called *Thomas Strowde*, and sometimes *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green*. See the title-page of that play.

⁷ "Paid unto John Daye, at the apoyntment of the company, the 2 of maye, 1601, after the playing of the 2 pte of Strowde, the some of xs."

⁸ "Layd out at the apoyntment of my sone and the company, unto hary chettle, for the alterynge of the booke of carnewille Wellsey, the 28 of June 1601, the some of xx s." I suspect, this play was not written originally by Chettle.

⁹ So called in one place; in another *The First Part of Cardinal Wolfey*. It was not produced till some months after the play written or altered by Chettle. Thirty-eight pounds were expended in the dress, &c. for Chettle's play; of which sum twenty-five shillings were paid "for velvet and mackynge of the docters gowne." The two parts of *Cardinal Wolfey* were performed by the earls of Worcester's servants.

- The Second Part of the Six Clothiers*, by the same.
- Nov. 1601. *Too good to be true*, by Henry Chettle, Rich. Hathwaye, and Wentworth Smith.
- Jan. 1601-2. *Judas*, by William Haughton, Samuel Rowley¹, and William Borne.
- Apr. 1602. *The Spanish Fig*.
- May 1602. *Malcolm king of Scots*, by Charles Massy.
- May 1602. *Love parts Friendship*, by Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smith.
- The Second part of Cardinal Wolsey*², by Henry Chettle.
- The Bristol Tragedy*, by John Day³.
- Tobias*, by Henry Chettle.
- Jesscha*, by Henry Chettle.
- Two Harpies*, by Dekker, Drayton, Middleton, Webster, and Mundy.
- July 1602. *A Danish Tragedy*, by Henry Chettle.
- July 1602. *The Widow's Charm*⁴, by Anthony Mundy.
- A Medicine for a Curst Wife*, by T. Dekker.
- Sampson*, by Samuel Rowley, and Edw. Juby.
- Sept. 1602. *William Cartwright*, by William Haughton.
- Sept. 1602. *Felmelance*, by Henry Chettle, and — Robin-son.
- Oct. 1602. *Josbua*, by Samuel Rowley.
- Oct. 1602. *Randall earl of Chester*, by T. Middleton⁵.
- Nov. 1602. *As merry as may be*, [acted at court] by J. Daye, Wentworth Smith, and R. Hathwaye.
- Albeke Galle*, by Thomas Heywood, and Wentworth Smith.
- Marshal Osrick*, by Thomas Heywood, and Wentworth Smith.

The

¹ This author was likewise a player, and in the same situation with Heywood, as appears from the following entry:

"Memorandum, that the 16 of november, 1598, I hired Charles Massy and Samuel Rowley, for a year and as muche as to fraistide, [Shrovetide] begenynge at the day above written, after the statute of Winchester, with ij syngell pence; and further they have covenanted with me to playe in my howsse and in no other howsse (dewringe the tyme) publick but in mine: yf they do without my consent to forfitt unto me xxx lb. a pece. Witnes Thomas Dowton, Robert Shawe, Edw. Jubey."

² "Lent unto Thomas Downton, the 18th of May, [1602] to bye maskynge antycke sewts for the 2 parte of Carnowlle Wollsey, the some of iij lb. vi. s. —" 27 of may, to bye Wm. Somers cotte, and other thinges, the some of iij lb.

³ Probably *The Fair Maid of Bristol*, printed in 1605.

⁴ Perhaps the play afterwards called *The Puritan Widow*.

⁵ Probably his play called *The Mayor of Queenborough*.

- The Three Brothers*, a tragedy, by Wentworth Smith.
- Lady Jane*, by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Wentworth Smith, and John Webster.
- The Second part of Lady Jane*, by Thomas Heywood, John Webster, Henry Chettle, and Thomas Dekker.
- Christmas comes but once a year*, by T. Dekker.
- The Overthrow of Rebels*.
- The Black Dog of Newgate*, by Richard Hathwaye, John Day, Wentworth Smith, and another poet.
- The second part of the same*, by the same.
- The Blind eats many a fly*, by T. Heywood.
- The Fortunate General*, a French History, by Wentworth Smith, John Day, and Richard Hathwaye.
- Dec. *The Set at Tennis*, by Anthony Mundy.
1602. *The London Florentine*, by Thomas Heywood, and Henry Chettle.
- The second part of the London Florentine*, by Thomas Heywood, and Henry Chettle.
- The Tragedy of Hoffman**, by Henry Chettle.
- Singer's Voluntary*, by John Singer.
- The four sons of Amon*, by Robert Shawe.
- Feb. *A woman kill'd with kindness*, by T. Heywood.
- 1602-3. *The Boast of Billingsgate*, by John Day, and Richard Hathwaye.
- March 1602-3. *The Siege of Dunkerck*, by Charles Massy.
- The patient man and honest whore*, by Thomas Dekker, and Thomas Middleton.
- The Italian Tragedy*, by Wentworth Smith, and John Day.
- Pontius Pilate*.
- Jane Shore*, by Henry Chettle and John Day.
- Baxter's Tragedy*.

The following notices, which I have reserved for this place, relate more immediately to our author. I have mentioned in a former page, that I had not the smallest doubt that the name of Shakspeare, which is printed at length in the title pages of *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600, and *The London Prodigall*, 1605, was affixed to those pieces by a knavish bookseller without any foundation;

* This play was printed in 1631.

foundation; and am now furnished with indubitable evidence on this subject; for under the year 1599 the following entry occurs in Mr. Henslowe's folio Manuscript:

"The 16th of October, 99. Received by me Thos. Downton of Philip Henslowe, to pay Mr. Monday, Mr. Drayton, Mr. Wilson, and Hathway, for *The first part of the Lyfe of Sir John Ouldcassell*, and in earnest of the Second Pie, for the use of the company, ten pound, I say received 10 lb."

Received [Nov. 1599] of Mr. Hinchelo for Mr. Munday and the reste of the poets, at the playinge of *Sir John Ouldcassell* the firste tyme, xs. as a gifte."

Received [Dec. 1599] of Mr. Henslowe, for the use of the company, to pay Mr. Drayton for the second parte of *Sir John Ouldcassell*, foure pound, I say received per me Thomas Downton, iij li⁴."

We have here an indisputable proof of a fact which has been doubted, and can now pronounce with certainty that our poet was entirely careless about literary fame, and could patiently endure to be made answerable for compositions which were not his own, without using any means to undeceive the publick.

The bookseller for whom the first part of *Sir John Oldeastle* was printed, "as it hath bene lately acted by the Right Honorable the earl of Nottingham Lord High Admirall of England his servants," was *Thomas Pavier*, who however had the modesty to put only the initial letters of his christian and surname (T.P.) in the spurious title-page which he prefixed to it. In 1602, he entered the old copy of *Titus Andronicus* on the Stationers books, with an intention (no doubt) to affix the name of Shakspeare to it, finding that our poet had made some additions to that piece.

To this person we are likewise indebted for the mistake which has so long prevailed⁴, relative to the two old plays entitled *The First Part of the Contention between the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster*, and *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, which were printed anonymously in 1600, as acted by the earl of Pembroke's servants, and have erroneously been ascribed to our poet, in consequence of Pavier's reprinting them in the year 1619, and then for the first time fraudolently affixing Shakspeare's name to them. To those plays, as to *Oldeastle*, he put only the initial lettets of his

⁴ That this second part of *Sir John Oldeastle* was performed on the stage, as well as the former, is ascertained by the following entry:

"Dd. [delivered] unto the littel taylor, at the apoyntment of Robert Shawe, the 12 of marche, 1599, [1600] to macke thinges for the 2^{de} pie of *ouldcastell*, some of xxx s."

⁵ See the *Dissertation on the Three Parts of K. Henry VI.* in Vol. IX.

his christian. and. surname. For him likewise *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, was printed in the year 1608, and our poet's name affixed to it.

The Life and Death of Lord Cromwell, published in 1602, and ascribed to W. S. and *The Puritan Widow*, which was published in 1607, with the same initial letters, were probably written by *Wentworth Smith*, a dramatick writer whose name has so often occurred in the preceding pages, with perhaps the aid of Anthony Mundy, or some other of the same fraternity. *Loocrine*, which was printed in 1595, as newly set forth, overseen, and corrected by W. S. was probably revised by the same person.

It is extremely probable from the register of dramatick pieces in a former page, that *Cardinal Wolfey* had been exhibited on the stage before our poet produced him in *K. Henry VIII.* To the list of plays written by Shakspeare upon subjects which had already been brought upon the scene, must also be added *Troilus and Cressida*, as appears from the following entries:

"Apriel 7, 1599. Lent unto Thomas Downton to lende unto Mr. Deckers, & harey cheattel, in earnest of ther boooke called *Troyeles and Cressedaye*, the some of iii lb."

"Lent unto harey cheattell, & Mr. Dickers, in pte of payment of their booke called *Troyelles & Cresseda*, the 16 of Aprell, 1599, xx s."

I suspect the authors changed the name of this piece before it was produced, for in a subsequent page are the following entries:

"Lent unto Mr. Deckers and Mr. Chettel the 26 of maye, 1599, in earnest of a booke called *Troylles and Crefeda*, the some of xx s." In this entry a line is drawn through the words *Troylles and Crefeda*, and "*the tragedie of Agamemnon*" written over them.

"Lent unto Robart Shawe, the 30 of maye 1599, in fulle payment of the boooke called *the tragadia of Agamemnon*, the some of iii li. vs.—to Mr. Deckers, and harey Chettell."

"Paid unto the Master of the Revells man for lycensyng of a boooke called *The Tragedie of Agamemnon* the 3 of June, 1599, viis."

We have seen in the list of plays performed in 1593-4 by the servants of the earl of Suffex, the old play of *Titus Andronicus*, in which on its revival by the king's servants, our author was induced, for the advantage of his own theatre, to make some alterations, and to add a few lines. The old play of

of *K. Henry VI.* which was played with such success in 1591, he without doubt touched in the same manner, in consequence of which it appeared in his works under the title of the *First Part of King Henry VI.* How common this practice was, is proved by the following entries made by Mr. Henflowe.

"Lent unto the companye, the 17th of August, 1602, to pay unto Thomas Deckers, for new *adycions* to *Owldcastle*, the some of xxx s.

"Lent unto John Thane, the 7 of september, 1602, to geve unto Thomas Deckers for his *adycions* in *Owldcastle*, the some of x s."

"Lent unto Samuel Rowley, the 14 of desember, 1600, to geve unto Thomas Deckers for his paynes in *Fayton*, [*Phaeton*] some of x s. For the corte."

"Lent unto Samuel Rowley, the 22 of desember, 1601, to geve unto Thomas Decker, for *altering* of *Fayton*, [*Phaeton*] for the corte, xxx s."

"Pd. unto Thomas Deckers, at the apoyntment of the company, the 16 of January 1601, towaads the *altering* of *Tasso*, the some of xx s.

"Lent unto my sonne E. Alleyn, the 7 of november, 1602, to geve unto Thomas Deckers for *mending* of the playe of *Tasso*, the some of xxx s.

"Lent unto Mr. Birde, the 4 of December, 1602, to paye unto Thomas Deckers, in pt of payment for *Tasso*, the some of xx s.

"These two old playes of *Phaeton* and *Tasso's Melancholy*, we have seen in a former page, had been exhibited some years before.

"Lent unto the company, the 22 of november, 1602, to paye unto William Birde, and Samuel Rowley, for ther *adycions* in *Doctor Fosses*, the some of iiij lb."

"Pd. unto Thomas Hewode, the 20 of september, [1602] for the new *adycions* of *Cutting Dick*, the some of xx s."

The following curious notices occur, relative to our poet's old antagonist, Ben Jonson; the last two of which furnish a proof of what I have just observed with respect to *Titus Andronicus*, and the *First Part of King Henry VI.*; and the last article ascertains that he had the audacity to write a play, after our author, on the subject of *K. Richard III.*

"Lent unto Bengemen Johnson, player, the 22 of July, 1597, in redy mony, the some of fower poundes, to be payd yt again whensoever ether I or my sonne [Edw. Alleyn] shall demand yt. I say iiij lb.

"Witnes E. Alleyn, & John Synger."

"Lent

" Lent unto Bengemen Johnstone, the 3d of desember, 1597, upon a booke which he was to writte for us before crylmas next after the date hereof, which he showed the plotte unto the company: I saye, lent in redy mony unto him the some of xx s.

" Lent Bengemyn Johnson, the 5 of Jenewary, 1597, [1597-8] in redy mony, the some of v s.

" Lent unto the company, the 18th of agust, 1598, to bye a boocke called *Hoate anger sone cowld*, of Mr. Porter, Mr. Cheattell, & Bengemen Johnson, in full payment, the some of vi lb.

" Lent unto Robert Shawe, & Jewbey, the 23 of octob. 1598, to lend unto Mr. Chapman, one [on] his playe boocke, & ij actes of a tragedie of *Bengemen's* plotte, the some of iij lb.

" Lent unto Wm. Borne, alias Birde, the 10 of agust, 1599, to lend unto Bengemyn Johnson and Thomas Dekker, in earnest of ther booke which they are a writing, called *Page of Plim*⁷, the some of xxxx s.

" Lent unto Thomas Downton, the 3 of september, 1599, to lend unto Thomas Deckers, Bengemen Johnson, Harey Cheattrell, and other jentellmen, in earnest of a playe called *Rubart the second kinge of Scottes tragedie*, the some of xxxx s.

" Lent unto Wm. Borne, the 23d of september, 1599, to lend unto Bengemen Johnstone, in earnest of a boocke called *the scottes tragedie*, the some of xx s.

" Lent unto Mr. Alleyn, the 25 of september, 1601, to lend unto Bengemen Johnson, upon his writing of his *adycians* in *Jeronymo*⁸, of xxxx s."

" Lent unto Bengemy Johnstone, at the apoyntment of E. Alleyn, and Wm. Birde, the 22 of June, 1602, in earnest

⁷ These three words are so blotted, that they can only be guessed at. I find in the next page—" Lent unto Mr. Birde, Thomas Downton, and William Jube, the 2 of September 1599, to paye in full payment for a boocke called the lamentable tragedie of *Page of Plymouth*, the some of vi lb."; which should seem to be the same play; but six pounds was the full price of a play, and the authors are different.—Bird, Downton, and Jubey, were all actors.

⁸ *The Spanish Tragedy*, written by Thomas Kyd, is meant, which was frequently called *Jeronymo*, though the former part of this play expressly bore that name. See the title-page to the edition of *the Spanish Tragedy* in 1610, where these new additions are particularly mentioned. Jonson himself alludes to them in his *Cynthia's Revels*, 1602: "Another sweares down all that are about him, that the *old Hieronymo*, as it was at first acted, was the only best and judiciously penned play in Europe."—Mr. Hawkins, when he republished this piece in 1773, printed most of Jonson's additions to it, at the bottom of the page, as "soisted in by the p'ayers."

nest of a boocke called *Richard Crook-back*, and for new additions for *Jeronymo*, the some of x lb.

I insert the following letter, which has been lately found at Dulwich College, as a literary curiosity. It shews how very highly Alleyn the player was estimated. What the wager alluded to was, it is now impossible to ascertain. It probably was, that Alleyn would equal his predecessors Knell and Bently, in some part which they had performed, and in which his contemporary, George Peel, had likewise been admired.

"Your answer the other night so well pleased the gentlemen, as I was satisfied therewith, though to the hazarde of the wager: and yet my meaning was not to prejudice *Peele's* credit, neither wolde it, though it pleased you so to excuse it. But beinge now growen farther in question, the partie affected to Bently scornynge to win the wager by your deniall, hath now given you libertie to make choyce of any one play that either Bently or Knell plaide; and least this advantage agree not with your mind, he is contented both the plaie and the tyme shalbe referred to the gentlemen here present. I see not how you canne any waie hurt your credit by this action: for if you excell them, you will then be famous; if equall them, you win both the wager and credit; if short of them, wee must and will saie, NED ALLEN STILL.

Your friend to his power,

W. P.

"Deny mee not, sweet Ned; the wager's downe,

"And twice as muche commaunde of me or myne;

"And if you wyne, I swear the half is thine,

"And for an overplus an English crowne:

"Appoint the tyme, and flint it as you pleas,

"Your labor's gaine, and that will prove it ease."

The two following letters, which were found among Mr. Henslowe's papers, ascertain the low state of the dramattick poets in his time. From the former of them it should seem, that in a few years after the accession of James the First, the price of a play had considerably risen. Neither of them are dated, but I imagine they were written some time between the years 1612 and 1615. Mr. Henslowe died about the 8th of January, 1615-16.

"Mr. Hinchlow,

"I have ever since I saw you kept my bed, being so lame that I cannot stand. I pray, Sir, goe forward with that reasonable

sonable bargayn for *The Bellman*. We will have but *twelve pounds*, and the overplus of the second day; whereof I have had ten shillings, and desyre but twenty shillings more, till you have three sheets of my papers. Good Sir, consider how for your sake I have put myself out of the assured way to get money, and from *twenty pounds* a play am come to *twelve*. Therefor in my extremity forsake me not, as you shall ever comand me. My wife can acquaint you how infinit great my occasion is, and this shall be sufficient for the receipt, till I come to set my hand to the booke.

Yours at comand,

ROBERT DABORNE."

At the bottom of this letter Mr. Henslowe has written the following memorandum:

"Lent Mr. Daborne upon this note, the 23 of agust, in earnest of a play called *The Bellman of London*, xxs."

"To our most loving friend;
Mr. Phillip Hinchlow,
Esquire, These.

"Mr. Hinchlow,

"You understand our unfortunate extremitie, and I doe not thincke you so void of christianitie but that you would throw so much money into the Thames as wee request now of you, rather then endanger so many innocent lives. You know there is xl. more at least to be receaved of you for the play. We desire you to lend us vl. of that; which shall be allowed to you; without which wee cannot be bayled, nor I play any more till this be dispatch'd. It will lose you xxl. ere the end of the next weeke, beside the hinderance of the next new play. Pray, Sir, consider our cases with humanity, and now give us cause to acknowledge you our true freind in time of neede. Wee have entreated Mr. Davison to deliver this note, as well to witnesse your love as our promises, and alwayes acknowledgement to be ever

Your most thanckfull and loving freinds.

NAT. FIELD.

"The money shall be abated out of the money remayns for the play of Mr Fletcher and ours.

ROB. DABORNE."

"I have ever found you a true loving freind to mee, and in soe small a suite, it beeinge hooest, I hope you will not faile us.

PHILIP MASSINGER."

Indorsed.

"Received by mee Robert Davison of Mr. Hinchlow, for the use of Mr. Daboerne, Mr. Feeld, Mr. Messenger, the some of xl.

ROBERT DAVISON."

The dimensions and plan of the Globe Playhouse, as well as the time when it was built, are ascertained by the following paper. I had conjectured that it was not built before 1596; and we here a confirmation of that conjecture.

"THIS INDENTURE made the eighte day of Januarye, 1599, and in the two and fortyth yeare of the reigne of our soveraigne ladic Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, Fraunce and Ireland, defender of the fayth, &c. Between Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Allen of the parishe of St. Saviours in Southwark, in the countie of Surry, gentlemen, on thone parte, and Peter Streete, citizen and carpenter of London, on thother parte, Witneseth; that whereas the said Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Allen the day of the date hereof have bargained, compounded, and agreed with the said Peter Streete for the erectinge, buildinge, and setting up of a new House and Stage for a play-howe, in and uppon a certeine plott or peece of grounde appoynted oute for that purpose. scituate and beeinge near Goldinge lane in the parish of Saint Giles without Cripplegate of London; to be by him the said Peter Streete or some other sufficient workmen of his providing and appoyntment, and att his proper costes and chardges, (for the consideration hereafter in these presents exprest) made, builded, and sett upp, in manner and form following: that is to saie, the frame of the saide howse to be sett square, and to containe fowerscore foote of lawful assize everye waie square, without, and fiftie five foote of like assize square, everye waie within, with a good, suer, and stronge foundation of pyles, brick, lym, and sand, both withoute and within, to be wrought one foote of assize at the leiste above the ground; and the saide frame to containe three stories in heighth, the first or lower storie to containe twelve foote of lawful assize in heighth, the second storie eleaven foote of lawful assize in heighth, and the third or upper storie to containe nine foote of lawfull assize in height. All which stories shall containe twelve foote and a half of lawful assize in breadth throughoute, besides a jutrey forwards in eyther of the

the saide two upper stories of tene ynches of lawfull assize; with fower convenient divisions for gentlemens roomes⁹, and other sufficient and convenient divisions for twoo-pennie roomes¹; with necessarie seates to be placed and sett as well in those roomes as throughout all the rest of the galleries of the said howse; and with suche like steares, conveyances, and divisions without and within, as are made and contrived in and to the late-erected playhowse on the Bancke in the said parish of Saint Saviours, called THE GLOBE; with a stadge and tyre-inge-howse, to be made, erected and sett upp within the saide frame; with a shadowe or cover over the saide stadge; which stadge shall be placed and sett, as alsoe the stearcases of the said frame, in such sorte as is prefigured in a plotte thereof drawn; and which stadge shall containe in length fortie and three foote of lawfull assize, and in breadth to extende to the middle of the yarde² of the said howse: the same stadge to be paled in belowe with good stronge and sufficyent new oken boardes; and likewise the lower storie of the said frame withinied, and the same lower storie to be alsoe laide over and fenced with stronge yron pyles: And the saide stadge to be in all other proportions contrived and fashioned like unto the stadge of the saide Playhouse called THE GLOBE; with convenient windowes and lights glazed to the saide tyre-inge-howse. And the saide frame, stadge, and stearcases, to be covered with tyle, and to have a sufficien, gutter of leade, to carrie and convey the water from the coveringe of the said stadge, to fall backwards. And alsoe all the saide frame and the stearcases thereof to be sufficyently enclosed without with lathe, lyme, and haire. And the gentlemens roomes and two-pennie roomes to be seeled with lathe, lyme, and haire; and all the flowers of the saide galleries, stories, and stadge to be boarded with good and sufficient newe deale boardes of the whole thicknes, wheare neede shall be. And the saide howse, and other things before mentioned to be made and doen, to be in all other contrivitions, conveyances, fashions, thinge and things, effected, finished and doen, according to the manner and fashion of the saide howse called THE GLOBE; saveinge only that all the principall and maine postes of the saide frame, and stadge forward, shall be square and wrought palaster-wise, with carved proportions called Satiers, to be placed and sett on the topp of every of the same postes: and saveing alsoe that the saide Peter Streete shall not be charged with anie manner of paynteinge in or aboute the saide frame, howse, or

N 2

⁹ What we now call *Boxes*.

¹ Perhaps the rooms over the boxes; what we now call *Balconies*.

² The open area in the centre.

